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Martial Arts Fiction: Translational Migrations East and West

by

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Declaration

The research work leading to this thesis has been undertaken in accordance with the safety policy of the University of Warwick. The thesis contains material from the following papers by the author:

"Translating Martial Arts Fiction: Some Problems and Considerations." *Tamkang Review* 24.1 (1993): 117-28

"Cultural Opaqueness in Martial Arts Fiction." *Translatio* 3-4 (1994): 294-99.

"On Translating Jin Yong's Martial Arts Fiction." *Journal of Macrolinguistics* 5 (1994): 70-79.

"What's Wrong with my Translation? Notes on Translating Martial Arts Fiction into English." In *Cross Cultural Transfers, Working Papers*, ed. Heloisa Gonçalves Barbosa. Warwick: Centre for British and Comparative Cultural Studies, University of Warwick, 1994. 62-69.

ABSTRACT

This thesis was motivated by Robert Chard's puzzlement over the translational phenomenon of martial arts fiction in the West. It proposes to address how the translational migration of martial arts fiction took place, first to other Asian countries in the 1920's, but to the West only after a lapse of a few decades beginning in the early 1990's. Adopting a descriptive approach as described by Gideon Toury, the thesis is intended to add further to the limited inventory of case studies in urgent demand to test the polysystem theory propounded by Even-Zohar.

The thesis is made up of two parts. Part I is a macro-level study of martial arts fiction, intended to contribute to testing the limits of the polysystem theory. After examining Chinese fiction as a low form in the Chinese literary polysystem and its weak function as translated literature in the Western literary polysystem, the study explores the translational phenomenon of martial arts fiction in the West as well as the concurrent phenomenon as to why so little of martial arts fiction has been translated into Western languages, compared to the copious amount into other Asian languages, to the extent of stimulating a new literary genre or (re)writing martial arts fiction in indigenous languages in Indonesia, Vietnam and Korea, sinicized countries or countries boasting large overseas Chinese communities. Issues and problems related to these translational activities and cultural phenomena are presented as tools to test the limits of the polysystem theory.

Part II is a micro-level study focussing on the specifics of rendering *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* by Jin Yong into English. I will argue, in the main, that many difficulties, inherent in both the translating and reading processes, can be constructed within the theoretical framework of André Lefevere's concept of "constraint", particularly that of the universe of discourse. Lefevere's connotation of the universe of discourse will be expanded to embrace different cultural presuppositions and literary assumptions underlying two divergent world cultures, hence different reader expectations in the reading process.

It is hoped that the findings and results of this descriptive case history of martial arts fiction as a literary genre in translational migrations will contribute to the accumulation of knowledge.

Introduction

A Case History to Test the Polysystem Theory

This thesis was motivated by Robert Chard's puzzlement over the translational phenomenon of martial arts fiction in the West. It proposes to address how the translational migration of martial arts fiction took place, first to other Asian countries in the 1920's, but to the West only after a lapse of a few decades beginning in the early 1990's. Adopting a 'descriptive approach'¹ as described by Gideon Toury, the thesis is intended to add further to the claim made in the Leuven seminar of 1976 that the polysystem theory propounded by Itamar Even-Zohar 'should be constantly tested against case-histories',² and also to add to 'the limited inventory of case studies, which is in such urgent need of enrichment, in sheer numbers as well as in terms of variety of behaviours',³ as Toury wrote in 1995. The case history chosen is martial arts fiction as a literary genre in translational migrations. Issues and problems related to these translational activities and cultural phenomena are presented as tools to test the limits of the polysystem theory.

Robert Chard, who has pioneered the translation of martial arts fiction by introducing Huanzhulouzhū's *Blades from the Willows* to the West in 1991, seems to be puzzled by the question of why this genre, which depicts 'exploits of chivalrous fighters [which] have captured the popular imagination for more than two thousand years, and are celebrated in ancient historical works and poetry',⁴ has been neglected for so long. He

¹ See Gideon Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1995).

² André Lefevere, 'Translation Studies: The Goal of the Discipline (Appendix)', in *Literature and Translation*, ed. by James S. Holmes et al (Leuven: ACCO, 1978), pp. 234-35 (p. 234).

³ Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, p. 192.

⁴ Robert Chard, translator's preface, *Blades from the Willows* by Huanzhulouzhū (London: Wellsweep, 1991), pp. 7-11 (p. 7).

points out that 'the wide appeal of the genre is evident in the extraordinary proliferation of novels, comic books, films, and television serials throughout the Chinese speaking world, but it has seldom been taken seriously as a form of literature,' lamenting that 'Chinese intellectuals condemn it as being worthless or even harmful (though many of them read it in private); scholars of modern Chinese literature in the West have largely ignored it.'⁵ Chard accuses those who consider themselves scholars of China who 'turn a blind eye to such a widespread cultural phenomenon because it is not good "literature" of being narrowminded.'⁶

One tends to agree that the scanty efforts expended in introducing martial arts fiction to the West may, in part, be attributed to its inferior status within the Chinese literary system. But taking up Susan Bassnett's claim that 'any study of literature that ignored works deemed to have no artistic merit was bound to be flawed and would result in a completely inadequate picture of textual production and reception',⁷ I believe that the study of contemporary Chinese literature in translation will not be adequate without including also martial arts fiction, as it is a major Chinese genre claiming a long literary tradition dating back to the Tang dynasty (AD 618-907), yet continuing to enjoy great popularity among Chinese readers all over the world. Thus, another contribution which this thesis hopes to make, besides introducing martial arts fiction as a literary genre to the polysystem of Chinese literature in translation in the West, is to help remove at least one flaw in the study of Chinese literature, thus rendering its reception more representative.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Susan Bassnett, 'Moving Across Cultures: Translation As Intercultural Transfer', in *Trasvases Culturales: Literatura; Cine. Traducción 2*, ed. by J.M. Santamaria et al (Vitoria-Gasteiz: Universidad del País Vasco, 1997), pp. 7-20 (p. 10).

Bassnett observes that the 'polysystem theory opened so many avenues to researchers in translation studies [...].'⁸ Bassnett also points out that 'all kinds of questions could now be asked that had previously not seemed to be of significance', such as:

Why do some cultures translate more and some less? What kind of texts get translated? What is the status of those texts in the target system and how does it compare to the status of the texts in the source system? What do we know about translation conventions and norms at given moments, and how do we assess translation as innovatory force?⁹

Exploring these questions may not only shed light on the translational phenomenon of martial arts fiction in the West which Chard found intriguing, but also on the concurrent phenomenon as to why so little of martial arts fiction has been translated into Western languages, compared to the copious amount into other Asian languages, to the extent of stimulating a new literary genre or (re)writing martial arts fiction in indigenous languages in Indonesia, Vietnam and Korea, sinicized countries or countries boasting large overseas Chinese communities.

Although martial arts-themed books,¹⁰ detective stories,¹¹ movies,¹² and related culture¹³ have made their impact felt in the West since the sixties, with Andrei Ramsey

⁸ Ibid., p. 11.

⁹ Susan Bassnett, *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), p. 142.

¹⁰ See Lisa Baldwin, compiled, *The Maccarrone-Kresge Martial Arts Book Collection at the Patchogue-Medford Library: An Annotated Bibliography* (Patchogue, N.Y.: Patchogue-Medford Library, 1982) which lists and annotates seven hundred and ninety texts in this private martial arts collection; Jennifer Lawler, *The Martial Arts Encyclopedia* (Indianapolis: Masters Press, 1996); and Stanley E. Henning, 'The Chinese Martial Arts in Historical Perspectives', *Military Affairs*, 45 (1981), 173-78.

¹¹ See Greg Goode, 'The Oriental in Mystery Fiction: The Oriental Detective. Part III', *The Armchair Detective*, 16.1 (1983), 73-74 and his 'The Oriental in Mystery Fiction: Martial Arts. Part IV', *The Armchair Detective*, 16.3 (1983), 257-61 which provide an account and partial checklist of mysteries featuring martial arts brought out in the West, particularly in the sixties and seventies.

¹² See Richard Meyers, Amy Harlib, Bill and Karen Palmer, *Martial Arts Movies* (Secaucus, N.J.: Citadel Press, 1985); Bill Palmer, Karen Palmer, and Ric Meyers, *The Encyclopedia of Martial Arts Movies* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1995); Marilyn D. Mintz, *The Martial Arts Films* (Rutland,

also capturing the spirit of martial arts in two of his poems collected in *Kung Fu Poetry*,¹⁴ martial arts-themed fiction written originally in Chinese, which has been

VT: C.E. Tuttle, 1983); and Hong Kong Urban Council, *A Study of the Hong Kong Martial Arts Film* (Hong Kong: Urban Council, 1980).

¹³ See Max J. Skidmore, 'Oriental Contributions to Western Popular Culture: The Martial Arts', *Journal of Popular Culture*, 25.1 (1991), 129-48; and Charles Holcombe, 'Theater of Combat: A Critical Look at the Chinese Martial Arts', *The Historian*, 52 (1990), 411-31.

¹⁴ Andrei Ramsey, *Kung Fu Poetry* (London: Regency Press (London & New York) Ltd., 1975). In his 'Deadly Play' (pp. 14-15), Ramsey describes the realization underneath self defence, emphasizing experience as well as the childlike mentality of the fighters:

I was long and fatal
Unless you're fortunate enough
Like batman
To come out quite whole
He experiencing growing pain.

The realization is a step
Underneath they are children
Self defence is not so common
Bruce Lee skill
Answer to every will

Your lack of power
May make you move over
Don't care attitude
Will matter when perhaps
They develop it and you're shaded

And in his 'Kung Fu 21st Century' (p. 32), Ramsey sums up his imagination into another century:

He was a Kung Fu boy
He was a Kung Fu boy
Oh yeh
Playing with toys

He was a Kung Fu
Chop suey a little bit of Bowie
And a natural born Bruce Lee
Oh yeh

This is the end of it all baby
Bye Bye Bruce Lee
See you Batman and Robin
Lost his scene
Genesis
Here we come
I'll be waiting for you.

translated copiously into different Asian languages,¹⁵ has been translated very infrequently into English or other European languages. It would appear that Gu Long's *Les Quatre Brigands du Huabei* (1990), Huanzhulouzhuzhu's *Blades from the Willows* (1991), Jin Yong's *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* (1993) plus two chapters from *The Deer and The Cauldron* (1994) as well as the first ten chapters appearing as *The Deer and The Cauldron: A Martial Arts Novel, First Book* (1997) are about the only translated works on martial arts fiction ever published in English or French. Viewed in the larger context of Chinese literature, this translational phenomenon serves only to reaffirm what Andrew Jones wrote earlier:

Frustrating, however, in that *in practice* Chinese literature clearly remains relegated to a kind of "cultural ghetto" on the outskirts of the "global village," despite the best aspirations of its creators, critics, and translators toward "upward mobility" in the transnational literary economy.¹⁶

Jones also observes, 'This hegemony, of course, is directly figured by the differential value of "major" and "minor" languages in the translational literary market.'¹⁷

Linguistic issues aside, when the target language is contemporary English, this weak position of translated literature within the literary polysystem in the West has resulted also from what Lawrence Venuti believes to be 'the grossly unequal cultural exchanges between the hegemonic English-language nations, particularly the United States, and their others in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas.'¹⁸

¹⁵ See Salmon, ed., *Literary Migrations*. It would appear that martial arts fiction in Japanese translation lagged behind other Asian languages. Jin Yong's novels in Japanese translation only began to appear as late as 1996, see Jin Yong, *Shu jian en chou lu* 《書劍恩仇錄》, trans. Yumi Okazaki 岡崎由美. Vol. 1-4 (Tokyo: Tokuma 徳間書店, 1996-97) and *Bi xue Jian* 《碧血劍》, trans. Soi Kojima 小島早依. Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Tokuma 徳間書店, 1997).

¹⁶ Andrew Jones, 'Chinese Literature in the "World" Literary Economy', *Modern Chinese Literature*, 8 (1994), 171-90 (p. 171).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

¹⁸ Lawrence Venuti, 'Introduction', in *Rethinking Translation*, ed. by Lawrence Venuti (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 1-17 (p. 5). He points out that 'in the six-year period between 1984 and 1990,

With the advent of the polysystem theory, as Edwin Gentzler writes,

Not only are translations and interliterary connections between cultures more adequately described, but intraliterary relations within the structure of a given cultural system and actual literary and linguistic evolution are also made visible by means of the study of translated texts.¹⁹

Polysystem theory was first formulated by Itamar Even-Zohar in articles written during the early 1970s and later taken up and developed by Gideon Toury.²⁰ It was based on the premise that a (translated) text is not an isolated entity but functions within a literary system. The literary system in turn interrelates with a set of other systems which may be literary or extraliterary, such as political or historical, and which together make up a hierarchical cultural system, forming what Gentzler describes as a 'network of correlated systems -- literary and extraliterary -- within society.'²¹

Even-Zohar's hypothesis recognizes both the "primary", i.e. creating new items and models, and "secondary", i.e. reinforcing existing items and models, function of translation within the polysystem.²² Test cases for his hypothesis, so far, have centered only around the European translated literary polysystem, with Israeli Hebrew literature

translations accounted for approximately 3.5 percent of the books put out annually in the United States, 2.5 percent in the United Kingdom' (pp. 5-6).

¹⁹ Edwin Gentzler, *Contemporary Translation Theories* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 108.

²⁰ Gideon Toury, *In Search of a Theory of Translation* (Tel Aviv: The Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics, 1980).

²¹ Gentzler, p. 114.

²² Itamar Even-Zohar, *Papers in Historical Poetics*, in Benjamin Hrushovski and Itamar Even-Zohar, eds. *Papers on Poetics and Semiotics 8* (Tel Aviv: Univeristy Publishing Projects, 1978), pp. 7-8.

serving as a case study for the "primary" importance of translated literature²³ while translated literature in France²⁴ and Dutch novels translated into English²⁵ as case studies for the "secondary". The present study is intended to inject raw data from a non-European, albeit culturally unrelated, literary system, hoping only that Even-Zohar can eventually steer away from what Gentzler believes to be 'such a tendency to generalize, especially with so little data on which to base conclusions, most of which are drawn from a very unique and specific culture [...].'²⁶

Translational activities of martial arts fiction in Asian countries testify to what Even-Zohar believes is a case of interference, 'defined as a relation(ship) between literatures, whereby a certain literature A (a source literature) may become a source of direct or indirect loans for another literature B (a target literature).'²⁷ When interference takes place, as Even-Zohar writes,

what may move, be borrowed, taken over from one "literature" to another is not just an item of repertoire, but also a host of other features/items. Often, it is not even repertoire which is the most decisive component participating in a specific interference relationship. The role and function of literature, the rules of the game of the literary institution, the nature of literary criticism and scholarship, the relations between religious, political, and other activities within culture and literary production -- all may be modelled in the given culture in relation to some other system.²⁸

²³ Toury discusses how German, English, and Russian literatures were translated into Hebrew in his *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, pp. 129-46.

²⁴ See José Lambert, Lieven D'hulst, and Katrin van Bragt, 'Translated Literature in France, 1800-1850', in *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Literature*, ed. by Theo Hermans (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1985), pp. 149-63.

²⁵ See Ria Vanderauwera, *Dutch Novels Translated into English: the Transformatiion of a "Minority" Literature* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1985).

²⁶ Gentzler, p. 124.

²⁷ Itamar Even-Zohar, 'Laws of Literary Interference', *Poetics Today* 11.1 (1990), 53-72 (p. 54).

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 54-55.

Viewed in the context of interference, translational activities of martial arts fiction in other Asian countries have not only acted as an innovatory force for creating new martial arts-themed novels, films, cartoons, and poetry in some places, but have also been appropriated by overseas Chinese in South-East Asia, such as introducing subversive readings, establishing cultural roots, keeping alive the cultural heritage, and enriching indigineous literature.

This thesis is made up of two parts. Part I, comprising Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4, which is a macro-level study of martial arts fiction as a literary form, is intended to contribute to testing the limits of the polysystem theory. Chapter 1 examines how Chinese fiction as a literary genre, particularly the traditional novel to which martial arts fiction belongs, functions as a "low" or "non-canonized" form in the Chinese literary polysystem. Chapter 2 discusses why Chinese fiction may fail to work in the West, pointing to the peripheral position occupied by translated literature and its attendant weak function in the Western literary polysystem. Chapter 3 discusses the extent to which martial arts fiction has been recognized, either in the original Chinese language or in English translation, thereby mapping out the positions assumed by the genre in the Chinese literary polysystem and in the Western polysystem of translated literature respectively. Chapter 4, after tracing the history of martial arts fiction in China, studies the translational migrations of martial arts fiction, including its forerunners, across different national, linguistic, and cultural boundaries to the macro-polysystem made up of translated literature in other Asian countries and in the West.

Part II, comprising Chapters 5, 6, and 7, is a micro-level study focussing on the specifics of rendering *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* by Jin Yong into English. The translated work, published in 1993 by the Chinese University Press, can be considered one of the pioneering works in introducing martial arts fiction to the West. I will argue, in the main, that many difficulties, inherent in both the translating and

reading processes, can be constructed within the theoretical framework of André Lefevere's concept of "constraint", particularly that of the universe of discourse.²⁹ Lefevere contends that texts, whether original or translated, and whether literary or not, are produced subject to a number of constraints, namely, patronage, poetics, universe of discourse, language and the original, the text itself. I shall focus only on his third constraint, the universe of discourse, and try to stretch it further, with a view to explaining why martial arts fiction in English translation may not function equally well in the target culture when compared to translations produced in Asian languages. Lefevere connotes the universe of discourse as

the knowledge of the world, his or her world, that is stored in the brain of the author and that is, at least he or she assumes it is, also stored in the brain of his or her readers. It is this shared knowledge that makes understanding of the work possible between both sides of the literary communication, and which also makes understanding sometimes very difficult, if not impossible, if the author and the reader belong to a different universe of discourse, i.e. to different cultures, to different historical phases of the same culture or even, increasingly so, to different subcultures.³⁰

In the chapters that follow, Lefevere's connotation of the universe of discourse will be expanded to embrace, in particular, different cultural presuppositions and literary assumptions underlying two divergent world cultures, hence different reader expectations in the reading process. Chapter 5 demonstrates, through a comparative study of the translation of a recurrent theme word in martial arts fiction, one of the complexities involved in translating the genre into English. Chapter 6 argues that generic difficulties encountered in the translating process may be attributed to the genre-

²⁹ André Lefevere, 'The Study of Literary Translation', *Tamkang Review*, 15.1-4 (1985), 367-88 (pp.372-84). See also his 'Why Waste Our Time on Rewrites? The Trouble with Interpretation and the Role of Rewriting in an Alternative Paradigm', in *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, ed. by Theo Hermans (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1985), pp. 215-43; and also his *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992).

³⁰ Lefevere, 'The Study of Literary Translation', p. 376.

specific universe of discourse, with artefacts often not found in the West and concepts too alien to the target audience. Chapter 7 examines the role of the reader, how cultural assumptions, or reader's shared knowledge, can help contribute to a better reading of martial arts fiction. The concluding chapter seeks to suggest possible new directions for future research into martial arts fiction as translated literature in the literary polysystem, both in the East or in the West.

It is hoped that the findings and results of this descriptive case history of martial arts fiction as a literary genre in translational migrations will contribute to the accumulation of knowledge, as Toury writes, 'the findings of well-performed studies *always* bear on their underlying theories', and 'they contribute to the verification or refutation of general hypotheses, and to their modification in particular.'³¹

³¹ Toury, *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, p. 15.

Chapter One

Xiaoshuo as a Literary Genre in Chinese Literature

Origins of *Xiaoshuo*

Xiaoshuo 小說, Chinese fiction, as a literary genre was little studied in the past and drew serious attention only in the 1920s.¹ In his *Chinese Popular Fiction in Two London Libraries* (1967), Liu Ts'un-yan 柳存仁 marked out three phases in the study of Chinese fiction. If the lectures delivered by Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881-1936) on the history of Chinese fiction at Peking University were considered the first phase, then the books on the study of Chinese fiction written by Sun K'ai-ti 孫楷第 (born 1902) constituted the second phase, while Liu Ts'un-yan's own research in the libraries of the British Museum and the Royal Asiatic Society in London in the summer of 1957 ushered in the third phase. Not until the pioneering efforts in the 1920s of such scholars as Hu Shi 胡適 (1891-1962) and Lu Xun did fiction become almost as respectable a genre as classical poetry. And it is only since 1931 that the study of Chinese fiction has become recognized as an academic field, drawing sinologists in Europe and America, almost three decades later, to take notice of the long tradition of Chinese fiction and this almost unexplored area of study.²

¹ Before the 1920s, Chinese scholars who encouraged the publication of fiction from their eminent position in the literary world during their times include Wang Shizhen 王士禎 (1634 - 1711) who wrote a poem praising Pu Songling's 蒲松齡 *Liao zhai zhi yi* 《聊齋誌異》 [Strange stories from a Chinese studio] and Yu Yue 俞樾 (1822 - 1906) who sponsored the publication of *San xia wu yi* 《三俠五義》 [Three knights-errant and five altruists] by revising it and re-titling it as *Qi xia wu yi* 《七俠五義》 [Seven knights-errant and five altruists]; and after the 1920s, Lu Xun 魯迅 who first introduced Chinese fiction as an academic subject at Peking University and brought out *Zhongguo xiao shuo shi lue* 《中國小說史略》 in 1932, later translated into *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1959) by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, *Xiao shuo jiu wen chao* 《小說舊聞鈔》 [Source materials on Chinese fiction] and *Tang Song zhuan qi ji* 《唐宋傳奇集》 [Collection of short stories of the Tang and Song periods]; Hu Shi 胡適 who carried out research on traditional novels, including *The Water Margin* and *Dream of the Red Chamber*; Cheng Chen-to 鄭振鐸 who went to Paris in 1927 to collect notes on the evolution of some fictional works in the Bibliothèque Nationale and brought out *Zhongguo wen xue yan jiu* 《中國文學研究》 [Studies on Chinese literature], 3 vols (Peking: Zuojia chubanshe, 1957); and Sun K'ai-ti 孫楷第 who went to Japan in 1931 to look up all the Chinese novels owned by the libraries or individual collectors there, as well as producing *Zhongguo tong su xiao shuo shu mu* 《中國通俗小說書目》 [Bibliography of Chinese popular fiction] (Peking: Zuojia chubanshe, 1957), later translated into Japanese by Hidetaka Otsuka (Tokyo, 1987), and *Riben Dongjing suo jian Zhongguo xiao shuo shu mu* 《日本東京所見中國小說書目》 [Bibliography of Chinese novels seen in Japan], in Liu Ts'un-yan, *Chinese Popular Fiction in Two London Libraries* (Hong Kong: Lung Men Bookstore, 1967), pp. 1-2.

² Liu Ts'un-yan, *Chinese Popular Fiction in Two London Libraries*, p. 3.

The term *xiaoshuo* 小說, which literally means "small talk", originally meaning "petty talk" or "roadside gossip", has been used for centuries for fiction, to designate forms of writing which had long been held in low regard. The origins and definitions of *xiaoshuo*, which bespeak its lower status in Chinese literature, has given cause for debates by critics both in China and in the West.³ According to Lu Xun, the earliest definition of the term *xiaoshuo* is found in Ban Gu's 班固 (AD 32 - 92) "Yi wen zhi" 藝文志 [Treatise on the arts and writing] in the *Han shu* 《漢書》 [History of the Western Han dynasty], completed shortly after AD 92. Ban Gu's definition of *xiaoshuo* is as follows:

The *xiaoshuo* writers succeeded those officers of the Zhou dynasty whose task it was to collect the gossip of the streets. Confucius said: 'Even by-ways are worth exploring but if we go too far we may be bogged down.' Gentlemen do not undertake this themselves, but neither do they dismiss such talk altogether. They have the sayings of

3 Fan Yanqiao 范煙橋, *Zhongguo xiao shuo shi* 《中國小說史》 [A history of Chinese fiction], first published in 1927 (Hong Kong: Huaxia chubanshe, 1967), pp. 1-2; Lu Xun, *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction*, trans. by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1959), pp. 19-36; Hu Huaichen 胡懷琛, *Zhongguo xiao shuo de qi yuan ji qi yan bian* 《中國小說的起源及其演變》 [The origins and development of Chinese fiction] (Nanking: Zhengzhong shuju, 1934), pp. 3-48; Liu Ts'un-yan 柳存仁, *Zhongguo wen xue shi* 《中國文學史》 [A History of Chinese literature] (Hong Kong: Dagong shuju, 1957), pp. 93-99; Patrick Hanan, 'The Development of Fiction and Drama', in *The Legacy of China*, ed. by Raymond Dawson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), pp. 115-43 (pp. 115-24); Meng Yao 孟瑤, *Zhongguo xiao shuo shi* 《中國小說史》 [A history of Chinese fiction] (Taipei: Wenxing shudian, 1966), pp. 1-18; C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 15; Eugene Eoyang, 'A Taste for Apricots: Approaches to Chinese Fiction', in *Chinese Narrative: Critical and Theoretical Essays*, ed. by Andrew Plaks (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 53-69 (p. 54); Ma Yau-woon and Joseph S.M. Lau, eds, *Traditional Chinese Stories: Themes and Variations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. xx-xxi; Adrian Hsia, 'The Popular Novel in Nineteenth-Century China', *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, 9.3 (1982), 461-69 (pp. 461-62); Ma Yau-woon, 'Fiction', in *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, ed. by William H. Nienhauser, Jr. and others (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 31-48 (pp. 31-33); Anthony C. Yu, 'History, Fiction and the Reading of Chinese Narrative', *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*, 10 (1988), 1-19 (p. 1); William H. Nienhauser, Jr., 'The Origins of Chinese Fiction', *Monumenta Serica*, 38 (1988-89), 191-219 (pp. 191-96); Chiu Kuei-fen, 'Writing and Rewriting in the Chinese Long Vernacular *Hsiao-shuo*', *Tamkang Review*, 21.1 (1990), 49-61 (pp. 49-53); James J. Lu, 'The Locality of the Novel: Some Peculiarities of Chinese and Japanese "Small Talk"', *Tamkang Review*, 21.2 (1990), 113-25 (pp. 113, 116-17); and especially Sheldon Hsiao-peng Lu, 'Rectifying the Terms, II: "Narrative," "History," and "Fiction" in China', in *From Historicity to Fictionality: The Chinese Poetics of Narrative* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 37-52.

the common people collected and kept, as some of them may prove useful. This was at least the opinion of country rustics.⁴

It follows from these ambivalent and condescending comments of Ban Gu that in ancient China special officials were appointed by the government to collect street gossip for compilations. It also follows that *xiaoshuo* originated in circulating street talk. Also, the inferior status of *xiaoshuo* could not be made clearer: the collection of small talk was beneath any of the educated as "gentlemen do not undertake this themselves".

The tradition of regarding the fiction writer as a minor officer of history invested with the functions of reporting, record-keeping, remonstrance, and rectification is further reflected in the following comments on the *xiaoshuo* entries, consisting largely of quotations from the *Zuo zhuan* 《左傳》 [Zuo commentaries] and Ban Gu:

Hsiao-shuo [*Xiaoshuo*] were the talk of the streets. Thus the *Tso chuan* [*Zuo zhuan*] quotes chair-bearer's chants, and the *Shih* (Book of Poetry) praises the ruler who consulted rustics. In days of old when a sage was on the throne, the historians made their records; the blind made their poems; the musicians recited their satires and remonstrances; the great officers admonished and instructed, and inferior officers reported to these what they heard; the common people uttered their complaints. Clappers sounded in early spring as a search was made for folk songs, and officers on tours of inspection understood local customs from the popular songs; and if mistakes had been made, these were rectified. All the talk of the streets and highways was recorded. Officers at court took charge of local records and prohibitions, and the officers in charge of civil affairs reported local sayings and customs. Thus Confucius said: "Even byways are worth exploring. But if we go too far, we may be bogged down."⁵

Xiaoshuo is also associated with *xiao dao* 小道, meaning "byway" or "minor art", a term that appears in the *Analect*. Despite its different interpretations by commentators in the past, *xiao dao* carries a pejorative meaning and implies either a discourse that is petty, misleading, and immaterial or an occupation that is disdained by the gentleman.

⁴ Quoted in Lu Xun, *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction*, p. 3.

⁵ Appeared originally in *ibid.*, p. 4. This modified version quoted in Sheldon Lu, *From Historicity to Fictionality: The Chinese Poetics of Narrative*, p. 45.

Apart from Lu Xun, other historians also trace the origin of Chinese fiction to the list of works labelled *xiaoshuo* in the *Han shu*. In the face of the serious debates regarding the definition of *xiaoshuo*, Ma and Lau contend that these writings can hardly be called fiction in the modern sense of the word.⁶ Nor, in their opinion, can passages from early historical works be regarded as fiction, as a distinction has to be made between history and fiction. However, Ma and Lau still believe that Chinese fiction is indebted to Sima Qian 司馬遷, the Grand Historian who compiled the *Shi ji* 《史記》 [The historical records] for the art of portraying characters as well as creating dramatic situations. As Ma and Lau subscribe to the view that a work of fiction is a work of the creative imagination rather than historical fact, they do not find it necessary to go beyond the second century AD.

William H. Nienhauser, in tracing the origins of Chinese fiction to oratorical exercises in Zhou texts, supports the claim that the term *xiaoshuo* occurs first in a text of the Warring States era (403-221 BC) and was explained in two Han (206 BC-AD 200) works.⁷ He also claims that probably it was not until the early Song Dynasty (AD 960-1279) that the term *xiaoshuo* took on a meaning approximating the idea of fiction used today.

In fact, the meaning of *xiaoshuo* in earlier times meant something slightly different, as Nienhauser continues to observe:

The early references suggest *xiaoshuo* was a polysemous term, equivocal at that time, signifying both a type of persuasion [...] involving relatively minor (*xiao*) philosophical or political problems as well as popular, oral stories recorded in the streets by officials for edification and amusement of the court.⁸

⁶ Ma and Lau, eds., *Traditional Chinese Stories: Themes and Variations*, p. xx.

⁷ Nienhauser, 'The Origins of Chinese Fiction', p. 191.

⁸ Ibid.

Suffice to say, *xiaoshuo* as a type of writing originated from oral discourse among the populace, claiming an entertainment function among the well-educated and powerful elite at court. Government officials despatched special officials out on to the streets and alleys to collect such oral data for purposes of record.

Nienhauser points out that it was a parable on subjectivity found in the Zhou texts, a monologue narrative based on a simple form presented as part of a minister's persuasion at court which led Crump to conclude that the *Zhan guo ce* 《戰國策》 [The intrigues] was a hand-book for persuaders and to label fiction of a particular class as "persuasion". He also points out Wilhelm was more inclined to view persuasion as fictional technique after examining the Zhou texts.⁹

Nienhauser traces the origins of oral fiction to Zhou texts which recorded the telling or recasting of fables, tales and historical episodes as one of the first exercises in rhetorical training. Rhetorical techniques of oral fiction were devised with certain literary as well as pedagogical functions in mind. Nienhauser cites many examples to illustrate the manner in which simple forms found in such rhetorical exercises lent themselves to providing one of the sources of early fiction. These rhetorical examples, some of which were originally designed to demonstrate oratorical talent, were later extended into stories, forming a branch of fiction which retained traces of its rhetorical origin throughout history.

To Nienhauser, the term *xiaoshuo* had an earlier meaning predating the present one whereby "*xiao*" 小, which literally means "small" was intended to be taken to refer to the "relatively minor philosophical or political problems" as well as "popular, oral stories recorded in the street" by officials for purposes of record and entertainment at court. The character "*shuo*" 說 referred to the persuasive nature of oratorical exercises and oral presentations by ministers at court. Nienhauser, who focussed his study on the Zhou texts,

⁹ Ibid., pp. 197-200.

suggests that one should take Zhou texts into consideration in examining the origins and development of Chinese fiction. Since Zhou works predate the establishment of pure fictional genres such as *zhiguai* 誌怪 (tales of the supernatural) and *zhuanqi* 傳奇 (pseudo-biographies of the strange and unusual),¹⁰ the classification of early fiction needs to be reassessed.¹¹

Like Nienhauser, another Western literary critic Adrian Hsia also traces the origins of Chinese fiction to the etymological and semantic nature of the term which is used traditionally to incorporate all kinds of "small talks", i.e. prose stories.¹² Unlike Nienhauser, Adrian Hsia's explanation of the term *xiaoshuo* is much closer to the meaning used today as he based his study on the examination of texts written in nineteenth-century China. One should note that the population was made up of illiterates and semi-illiterates in traditional China. In the evening, people would go to the night markets to be entertained by street storytellers.¹³ The tales these storytellers spun were sometimes more historical than fictional. The storytellers would end the stories at a critical moment, entailing suspense, and invite the audience to return the following evening to find out how the story would proceed. Each storytelling session was called *hui* 回 -- a turn -- in Chinese. The sessional nature accompanying the act of storytelling may perhaps explain why the Chinese novel is episodic, without the kind of unity found in Western novels. The storytellers usually had their tales recorded in some kind of draft-book. Masters would also take disciples. They would pass on to their pupils both the profession of storytelling as well as

¹⁰ James J.Y. Liu, in *The Chinese Knight-errant* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1967), p. 210, additional note 8, points out that the term *zhuanqi* 傳奇 has four different meanings, namely, (1) classical tales of the Tang and Song periods, this sense is still used sometimes, (2) romantic love stories of oral tales told in the Song Dynasties, (3) dramatic writing of any kind since Southern Song, and (4) long dramatic romances since the Ming Dynasty.

¹¹ Nienhauser, 'The Origins of Chinese Fiction', p. 217.

¹² Adrian Hsia, 'The Popular Novel in Nineteenth-Century China', p. 461.

¹³ H.C. Chang provides a vivid account of the Song storytellers in the urban markets in his Introduction in *Chinese Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973), pp. 17-21.

their draft-books, which, in the course of time were enriched and enlarged, until some day they came to be collected and compiled by the well-educated or scholars. These learned men edited and rewrote these novels. Occasionally, a masterpiece was the result.

Collective composition like this may take a long time to yield a novel. *Shui hu zhuan* 《水滸傳》, *The Water Margin* or *All Men are Brothers* in English translation, provides a good example, as Adrian Hsia observes:

Water Margin, in Chinese *Shui-Hu-Chuan*, consists of a series of episodes centering on 36 major and 72 minor bandit-heroes; it is the Chinese equivalent of [the] Robin Hood legend, set in the last decades of the Northern Sung Dynasty (1116-26). The novel took about 500 years to achieve its final form and had its origin in popular legends which began to circulate immediately after the downfall of the Sung dynasty. These were collected by the professional story-tellers in their repertoire-books. By 1300, there were at least two printed versions in existence. To these, many new episodes and characters were added in the course of the Yuan Dynasty (1280-1368). Playwrights took hold of the topic; they romanticized the bandits and changed them into a mixture of Robin Hood and Götz von Berlichingen, i.e. they were heroes loyal to the emperor, but oppressed by the corrupt officials who surrounded him. The first original version of the novel, written by Shih Nan-an and Lo Kuan-chung, can be traced back to 1370, and the last and most popular version was published in 1644.¹⁴

According to Adrian Hsia, this development can be traced back to approximately the eleventh century. Or, in other words, the origins of the vernacular popular novel date back to that period in history.

John Lyman Bishop also traces the development of the colloquial short story or *xiaoshuo* to the eleventh century in his book *The Colloquial Short Story (A Study of the San-Yen Collection)*. His findings were based on the accidental discovery made by Aurel Stein in 1907. Stein found twenty thousand pictures and manuscripts inside a walled-up cave in Dunhuang on the northwest frontier of China, apparently hastily stored there during an emergency early in the eleventh century. They cover roughly a period from AD 400 to 1000 and include some of the earliest samples of popular fiction, thus leading Bishop to conclude

¹⁴ Adrian Hsia, 'The Popular Novel in Nineteenth-Century China', p. 461, footnote 1.

that the study of the colloquial short story or *xiaoshuo* dates from this period and these Dunhuang manuscripts.¹⁵ The discovery of the Dunhuang material pushes the date of the earliest known sources for popular fiction, which were certain prototypes, from what was commonly believed to be the thirteenth or fourteenth century to the eleventh.

Writing on the colloquial short story in China, Bishop tries to explain what the term *xiaoshuo* comes to embrace: '[*Xiaoshuo* is] [a]n even less precise term in Chinese than the word *story* in English, meaning, as it can, any narration, fictional or true, from a tale or story to a novel of a hundred chapters, as well as an historical or literary anecdote.'¹⁶

Bishop highlights the narrative nature in *xiaoshuo* even though he fails to define what precisely this genre is. What he points out here is that it is the oral tradition of the composition, rather than its being fictitious or true, short or long, historical or literary, that gives it the label *xiaoshuo*. This emphasis on the narrative aspect in *xiaoshuo* survives and remains prominent in martial arts fiction up to the present. Although others have also attempted to determine the nature of *xiaoshuo* using criteria different from his, they never seemed to refute one point -- that the length of *xiaoshuo* is not a measuring standard.¹⁷

¹⁵ The Dunhuang manuscripts can now be found inside the archives and libraries in London, Paris, Russia, Japan, and China. They are a type of narration known as *bianwen* 變文, meaning "popularization", originally a religious type of narration associated with Buddhism, composed to familiarize the common illiterate with the hagiography and less difficult tenets of Buddhism. It is a mixed genre of verse and prose, an innovation in Chinese literature. In the *bianwen*, both verse and prose form an equally integral part of narrative. The verse is no longer confined to verifying or corroborating a statement as before. Bishop also tries to explain *bianwen* as what the Chinese now designate as *duanpian xiaoshuo* 短篇小說 [short stories], this term appeared only after Chinese writing has become increasingly more influenced by Western literature after the Literary Revolution of 1917. Ma Yau-woon classifies *bianwen* as one type of stories according to his idea of a story-novel dichotomy pertaining to the classification of the *xiaoshuo* genre using the absence of formal division chapters to distinguish stories from novels. See his 'Fiction', pp. 31-48. The dating of the *xiaoshuo* to the eleventh century and to the Dunhuang material is found in John Lyman Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China (A Study of the San-Yen Collection)* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956), p. 2.

¹⁶ Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China*, p. 21, note 4.

¹⁷ Sun K'ai-ti 孫楷第 adopts a "non-historical point of view" for *xiaoshuo* which includes both stories and novels, reserving a "historical point of view" for *jiangshi* 講史, historical novels or popularization of histories. See his *Zhongguo tong su xiao shuo shu mu* 《中國通俗小說書目》 [A bibliography of popular Chinese Fiction] (Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 1957). Ma Yau-woon uses as criterion the

However, Bishop does use "length" later to distinguish one group of *xiaoshuo* in his study of the colloquial short stories which belong to "two collections of *xiaoshuo*" by Ling Mengchu 凌濛初 -- *Pai an jing qi* 《拍案驚奇》 [Amazing stories] (1627) and *Er ke pai an jing qi* 《二刻拍案驚奇》 [More amazing stories] (1632). Bishop is careful to point out though:

The term as used in this study [of the colloquial short stories] will be limited to fictional stories or stories in which historical material is treated imaginatively, short enough in terms of oral literature to be read in a single recitation or in terms of written literature to be read as a self-contained unit in a sitting [...].¹⁸

It follows from Bishop that although "length" does not seem to be a measuring standard for the *xiaoshuo* genre per se, as pointed out earlier by himself, "length" itself does constitute one of the distinguishing features of the "two collections of stories" by Ling Mengchu as one special type of *xiaoshuo*, the colloquial short story, in the late Ming Dynasty, along with other distinguishing features such as "historical material", "imagination", and "in one single recitation", either oral or written, all of which did not seem to feature in Bishop's earlier explication of the *xiaoshuo* genre. It also follows from Bishop that the *xiaoshuo* tradition developed into something more complex in the course of time, already beyond narrative tales in which professional storytellers specialized.

To this already complex picture of the *xiaoshuo* genre, with different critics tracing its origin to different times in history, each relying on his own individual definition of *xiaoshuo* -- Nienhauser tracing it to the Zhou Dynasty; Ma Yau-woon and Joseph S.M. Lau to not earlier than the second century; Adrian Hsia to closer to the eleventh century; while Bishop pushed the commonly believed thirteenth and fourteenth centuries back to the eleventh century -- C.T. Hsia 夏志清 even suggests the eighteenth century:

authorial intention to create imaginative reality for identifying written compositions as *xiaoshuo* and the physical form of the work involved for identifying its groupings into either stories or novels, in his 'Fiction', p. 33.

¹⁸ Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China*, p. 21, note 4.

If we adopt the modern definition of the novel as a form of narrative distinct from the epic, the chronicle, and the romance, then we could say that the Chinese novel found its true identity only belatedly in an eighteenth-century work which also happens to be its supreme masterpiece.¹⁹

The eighteenth-century masterpiece referred to by C.T. Hsia is the *Dream of the Red Chamber*. Bishop has more to say about the "two collections of *xiaoshuo*" of Ling Mengchu:

In most cases they were original productions based on contemporary materials, Tang tales in the literary language (*chuanqi*), and Yuan dramas as sources. Their uniform style shows the work of a single writer and lacks the usual traces of oral presentation.²⁰

Thus, it follows from Bishop that *xiaoshuo* can involve either collective authorship, as in *The Water Margin*, or single authorship, as in the "two collections of *xiaoshuo*" by Ling Mengchu; and also that *xiaoshuo* can be rich in oral presentation, as in the Dunhuang manuscripts, or lacking at all, as in the "two collections of *xiaoshuo*" mentioned here. The complexity of the *xiaoshuo* seems to have moved beyond what any single critic can possibly hope to cover in full, with certain characteristic features associated with a unique type of *xiaoshuo*, particularly original compositions, evolved in the course of time, seemingly inclined to elude precise description.

As vernacular popular novels may be traced to an oral tradition, a lot of the rhetorical features associated with storytelling can still be found in written versions of the tales. The fact that a vernacular novel begins each chapter with a verse and ends it with another verse not an uncommon phenomenon. Unlike the storytellers in the night markets who closed each *hui* with the words: 'If you wish to find out what happens in the tale, you will have to

¹⁹ C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 15.

²⁰ Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China*, p. 19.

come back tomorrow evening,' the writers of vernacular Chinese novels would finish each *hui*, meaning chapter, with the sentence: 'If you wish to find out what happens in the story, you will have to turn to the next chapter.'

Now, Chinese fiction has to be examined within the distinctions made in Chinese literature if a more comprehensive picture is to be obtained. Three different modes of communication are used in Chinese literature. The first is the classical (literary) language, so remote from ordinary speech that it is intended only as a written mode for scholars trained to compose literature in classical styles. The second is the ordinary spoken language, targetted at a listening public. The third is the written vernacular, addressed to a wide reading public. And corresponding to each of the three different modes of communication in Chinese literature, there existed three different kinds of literature. The first kind is a classical literature, written in the classical (literary) language, which constituted the sole recognized literature. The second kind is an oral literature developed earliest in history, which, although sometimes written down, was primarily intended for a listening public. The third kind is a vernacular literature, composed in a different language and intended for a wider reading public than the recognized literature, which came into existence latest in history, commonly held to be the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Chinese fiction is the preserve of the second and third modes, i.e. the oral and vernacular literatures. Here, one's attention is drawn to the fact that both a written and an oral mode of narrative are found in Chinese fiction; and within the written mode of narrative itself a distinction has to be made between the classical and vernacular modes of writing. The oral discourse predates that of the written text; and within the written mode itself classical literature predates vernacular fiction.

Patrick Hanan suggests that according to the mode of communication, there might at a given time be as many as three concurrent literatures and the criteria which distinguish one literature from another are a distinct mode of communication, a distinct authorship, and, to

some degree at least, a distinct reading public.²¹ In his "Chinese Popular Literature and Its Contexts" (1981), David Johnson emphasizes the added criteria of audience and content in distinguishing the various types of literature -- oral, popular, elite -- from each other, pointing out that a work of literature cannot survive without addressing the needs of its audience and confirming their expectations.²² According to Johnson, literacy as criterion divides the audience for popular literature into two parts -- oral folk literature and popular written literature. Differences in education, implying the ability to comprehend written texts, which reflect differences in economic and social standing, help produce two types of audience for two written literatures -- popular literature and elite literature.

Following these distinctions, Nienhauser thus finds three major traditions in Chinese fiction -- fiction written in the classical language, vernacular fiction, and oral fiction. He points out also fiction written in the classical language is limited primarily to short stories - not always what Western scholars would consider "stories" -- and extant texts date from the Han Dynasty. Vernacular fiction is the generally noted tradition, which began as least as early as the Tang Dynasty, and was influenced by oral storytelling.²³

To Bishop, 'the oral conventions persisted to such a degree [...] that these, once functional literary devices have been retained as unessential literary clichés.'²⁴ Bishop criticizes their

²¹ The idea of different concurrent "literatures" is treated in very general terms, as it applies to China, in Patrick Hanan, 'The Development of Fiction and Drama', in *The Legacy of China*, ed. by Raymond Dawson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), pp. 115-43 (pp. 116-20). See also his 'The Early Chinese Short Story: A Critical Theory in Outline', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 27 (1967), 168-207. Reprinted in *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres*, ed. by Cyril Birch (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 299-338 (pp. 301-03). Citations from Hanan's 'The Early Chinese Short Story: A Critical Theory in Outline' will be made from the reprinted version throughout the text.

²² David Johnson, 'Chinese Popular Literature and Its Contexts', *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*, 3 (1981), 225-33.

²³ Nienhauser, 'The Origins of Chinese Fiction', p. 191.

²⁴ John Bishop, 'Some Limitations of Chinese Fiction', *Far Eastern Quarterly*, 15 (1956), 239-47, reprinted in *Studies in Chinese Literature* (Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies XXI), ed. by John Bishop (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), pp. 237-45 (p. 239). Citations from Bishop's article will be made from the reprinted version throughout the text.

negative effects on the development of Chinese novel, not without pointing out that this phenomenon has also been criticized in some novels written in the West:

As a sort of author's commentary on the story he is relating, their cumulative effect is to destroy the illusion of veracity which naturalistic plot details attempt to create; and the retention of such conventions has impeded the development of a realistic narrative technique toward its ultimate goal of producing an effect of actuality. Fielding's digressions on the prose epic in *Tom Jones* and Thackeray's more intimate intrusions into his novels have called forth similar criticism in the West.²⁵

Lin Yutang 林語堂 seems to find these literary aspects of Chinese novels present also in some works in the West, as he describes in his *My Country and my People* (1936):

In looseness of plot, the Chinese novel is like the novels of D.H. Lawrence, and in length like the Russian novels of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. The similarity between Chinese and Russian novels is quite apparent. Both have an extremely realistic technique, both revel in details, both content themselves with telling the story without the subjectivity characteristic of Western Europe. Fine psychological portrayal there is, but there is very little room for the author to expand over his psychological knowledge. The story is told primarily as a story.²⁶

The afore-mentioned similarity between Chinese and Russian novels, initially apparent in characteristics such as using realistic techniques and lacking subjectivity in telling a story, took on an added new dimension after the Literary Revolution of 1917 as many of the familiar heroes in works written by great novelists of the time were portrayed with a strong Russian flavour.²⁷

²⁵ Bishop, 'Some Limitations of Chinese Fiction', pp. 239-40.

²⁶ Lin Yutang, *My Country and my People* (London and Toronto: Heinemann, 1936; repr. 1938), p. 263.

²⁷ Ng Mausang argues that this literary phenomenon in modern Chinese fiction can be attributed to the Russian influence which took firm root in the Chinese intellectual tradition as a result of the Literary Revolution of 1917. He traces this Russian influence in the works of famous novelists such as Lu Xun, Yu Dafu, Mao Dun and Ba Jin to their favourable responses to nineteenth century Russian works and their sympathetic reception of Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Andreiev, Artzybashev and others. See *The Russian Hero in Modern Chinese Fiction* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1988).

In his article "Fiction" (1985), Ma Yau-woon offers some new insights into the study of Chinese fiction. According to him, fiction may be defined as 'a composition written mainly in prose that creates imaginative rather than factual reality. [...] It not only creates an imaginative reality, but brings about a reality which is the result of a conscious act on the part of the author.'²⁸ Ma maintains that neither function, whether to instruct, entertain, or persuade; nor formalistic elements, such as situation, plot, character, theme, and point of view, should be used as a criterion for identifying a composition as fiction. Rather, it is how the subject matter is presented in a prescribed manner that matters more.

Ma attributes the confusion over Chinese fiction to three main causes. Much of the confusion is caused by the use of the term *xiaoshuo*. The second source of confusion can be traced to the desire, particularly among literary historians, to date the development of a tradition beyond what can be verified by concrete evidence. And the third source of confusion is generated by the failure to distinguish mythology from fiction.²⁹

Ma traces the first period of Chinese fiction to the Six Dynasties as 'that provides a host of concrete examples of prose compositions which consciously create imaginative reality, with or without the use of historical sources.'³⁰ He maintains that the development of fiction should not go beyond that period and that ancient references should only be registered to clarify the early connotations of *xiaoshuo* and other similar terms, but they should not be quoted as evidence of the early development of fiction in China.

Classification of *Xiaoshuo*

Xiaoshuo had been put into different categories by historians and bibliographers in the past. Literary critics have adopted or seemed to have followed different classification schemes

²⁸ Ma Yau-woon, 'Fiction', p. 31.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 31-32.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 33.

for *xiaoshuo*, depending on whether their main focus is on the characteristic features of the period in history, functions, languages and styles, sub-genres, or subject matters of the *xiaoshuo*.³¹ Sinologists have also suggested different classification systems for *xiaoshuo* according to how the term is defined by each. Ban Gu 班固 (AD 32 - 92), in the "Yi wen zhi" 藝文志 [Treatise on the arts and writing] in the *Han shu* 漢書 [History of the Former Han dynasty], grouped *xiaoshuo* writers under the "philosophers section" (*zhu zi lie* 諸子列). Ban Gu's classification system places *xiaoshuo* as the same type of writing as Confucianism or Taoism although *xiaoshuo* writers were placed last among the ten "schools of thought" (*jia* 家), which include Confucianism, Taoism, Mohism, Legalism, and yin-yang theory, and four others. Since this initial effort of Ban Gu, fiction remained under "philosophy" in all subsequent bibliographical sections in the dynastic histories.³²

Generally speaking, two distinct and yet related conceptions of *xiaoshuo* have been entertained by the Chinese. *Xiaoshuo* has been regarded as either a minor philosophical discourse or a type of unofficial, inferior history. The first conception makes fiction some kind of philosophical work; while the second conception classifies it as belonging to historical work. In his *From Historicity to Fictionality: The Chinese Poetics of Narrative* (1994), Sheldon Lu observes that despite the ambivalent attitude harboured towards fiction, it is the social function that determines the acceptability of fiction in Chinese culture, as usual in Confucian approaches to things, explaining that:

³¹ Systematic classification schemes of Chinese writings and *xiaoshuo* are found in Sheldon Lu, *From Historicity to Fictionality: The Chinese Poetics of Narrative*, pp. 42-52 and in Fan Yanqiao 范煙橋, *Zhongguo xiao shuo shi* 中國小說史 [History of Chinese fiction], pp. 337-39. Those who focussed on the characteristic features of each period in history include Chinese critics Fan Yanqiao (1927), Lu Xun (1933), Liu Ts'un-yan (1957), Meng Yao (1966), and Ma Yau-woon (1985). Fan Yanqiao, p. 339, points out that, in general, the *xiaoshuo* contemporary in his period could be labelled according to different subject matters, such as supernatural, romance, family, moral, society, politics, history, military affair, detective, adventure, martial arts and knight-errantry (*wuxia*), education, science, humour, idealistic, parable, etc.

³² A detailed account on Ban Gu is given in Sheldon Lu, pp. 42-46.

Seen as a philosophical persuasion, fiction could be both a subversive and an instructive force. But since fictional discourse spreads heterodoxical principles and dissents from Confucian ideology, its dissemination in society must be controlled and regulated. Nevertheless, insofar as fictional discourse may supplement existing knowledge and provide new information for the governing of public affairs, it should not be rejected outright by the broad-minded Confucian gentleman. As a special type of history, fiction is something to be both guarded against and utilized appropriately. On the one hand, fiction is trivial, untrustworthy, and ignoble to the mind of the historian since it consists of gossip, popular opinion, unreliable sources, fabrications, and subject matter unsuitable to high historiography; on the other hand, fiction may be incorporated in official Chinese culture since the stories and satires of fiction may be read as an index of popular sentiment. It voices the will of the common people and thus performs the positive function of remonstrance.³³

Since the Tang Dynasty, writings had been classified into four major categories: (1) *jing* 經 (Confucian Classics, canonical writings); (2) *shi* 史 (historical records); (3) *zi* 子 (philosophical discourses); and (4) *ji* 集 (miscellaneous works, including belles lettres and literary collections). This system had become standard in all ensuing Chinese dynastic histories, up until the Qing Dynasty. In the tetrapartite system, *xiaoshuo* is a subdivision of "philosophy section" (*zi bu* 子部), seen as competing with and challenging the predominant discourse of the Confucian canons (*jing* 經).

It was also during the Tang Dynasty that an initial attempt at systematic classification of the miscellaneous work known at the time was first undertaken by the Tang historian Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661-721).³⁴ Liu arranged the semi-official and non-official histories and *xiaoshuo* into ten types: (1) "special records" (*pian ji* 偏記), which are incomplete dynastic histories; (2) "short notes" (*xiao lu* 小錄), a type of biographical sketch; (3) "lost records" (*yi shi* 逸事), which are either rediscovered ancient histories or later fictional works describing aspects of life excluded from official histories; (4) "trivial talks" (*suo yan* 瑣言), works of fiction, dialogues, and collections of sayings and anecdotes; (5) "prefectural histories" (*jun shu* 郡書), biographies of eminent local individuals; (6) "family histories"

³³ Sheldon Lu, p. 40.

³⁴ A detailed account on Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 is given in *ibid.*, pp. 48-50.

(*jia shi* 家史), pedigrees, private biographies of eminent individuals such as virtuous women, filial children, pious ministers, and recluses; (8) "miscellaneous records" (*za ji* 雜記), stories of strange, extraordinary, and supernatural events; (9) "geographical books" (*di li shu* 地理書), which describe the social customs, scenery, and natural resources of local regions; and (10) "books of capitals and cities" (*du yi bu* 都邑簿), which describe the architecture, palaces, and designs of dynastic capitals. Some texts proved problematic. Liu found it difficult to decide whether they belonged to history or to *xiaoshuo*. Also some works have been shuffled back and forth between "philosophy" and "history".

During the Song Dynasty, as story-telling developed into a highly specialized profession, *xiaoshuo* came to belong to one of the four classes of narration, as recorded by Guanyuan Naideweng 灌園耐得翁 in his *Du cheng ji sheng* 《都城記勝》 [Guidebook of the capital city] (1235).³⁵ The place of *xiaoshuo*, particularly the type classified as chivalry *xiaoshuo*, long considered a prototype of martial arts fiction, can be found in the following diagram drawn up by Bishop from evidence found in four works describing the two Song capitals:³⁶

³⁵ The *Du cheng ji sheng* 《都城記勝》 [Guidebook of the capital city] text reads: 'There are four classes of narrators: first, those of *hsiao-shuo* (which are also called "flutes"), dealing with love, ghosts, and marvels, with criminal investigations, all of which are stories of knives, cudgels, or rising in the world and reversals of fortune, and with "valorous knights" (stories of soldiers, horses, weapons and drums); [second,] "scriptural narrations" (explanations of Buddhist texts) and "narrations of requests for instruction" (tales of such matters as patrons and guests, meditation and enlightenment); [third,] "historical narrations," reciting the histories, records, and biographies of previous dynasties, the rise and fall of states and wars. The narrators of history fear most the narrators of *hsiao-shuo*, for these can resolve the events of a whole dynasty or a generation in an instant. [Fourth,] there is *ho sheng* which is like ordering and obeying [improvising on topics which have been set?] and in which each performer has his own speciality.' In Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China*, p. 8.

³⁶ Four works describing the two Song capitals provide abundant evidence on Chinese colloquial *xiaoshuo*. Meng Yuanlao's 孟元老 *Dong jing meng hua lu* 《東京夢華錄》 (circa 1127) describes the Northern Song capital Bianliang. Guanyuan Naideweng's 灌園耐得翁 *Du cheng ji sheng* 《都城記勝》 (1235); Wu Zimu's 吳自牧 *Meng liang lu* 《夢梁錄》 (1274 ?); and Zhou Mi's 周密 *Wu lin jiu shi* 《武林舊事》 (1274?) describe the Southern Song capital Linan. Bishop provides a comparison of the categories of narration mentioned in these four works, which is as follows:

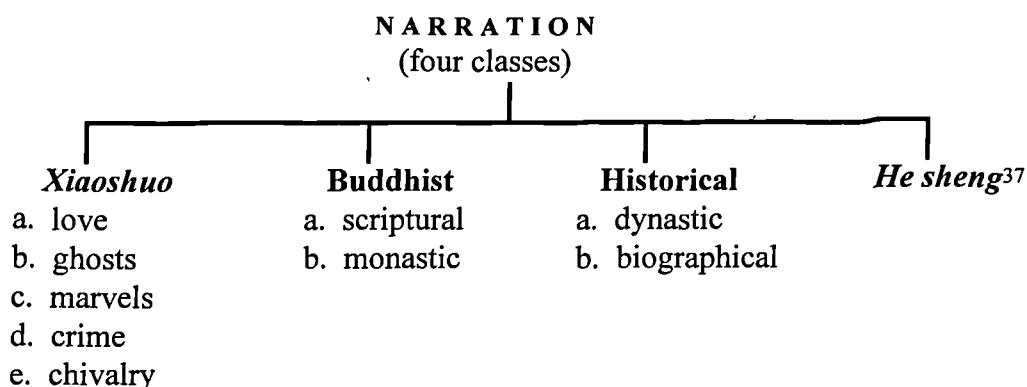


Fig. 1 Four Classes of Narration as Recorded in *Du cheng ji sheng* 《都城記勝》

Story-telling being a highly specialized profession in the Song Dynasty, story-tellers either specialized in fiction proper (*xiaoshuo* 小說), explanations of Buddhist scriptures (*shuojing* 說經), popularizations of history (*jiangshi* 講史), or performance involving playing on words (*hesheng* 合生). It follows that *xiaoshuo*, fiction proper, was a kind of narration, already developed in the thirteenth century, which story-tellers specialized in during the Song Dynasty (960 - 1278) when the growth of urban centres gave impetus to the development of popular fiction as claimed by Jaroslav Prušek in his article "Urban

Northern Song (Bianliang)	Southern Song (Linan)		
<i>Dong jing meng hua lu</i> 《東京夢華錄》 (1127)	<i>Du cheng ji sheng</i> 《都城記勝》 (1235)	<i>Meng liang lu</i> 《夢梁錄》 (1274?)	<i>Wu lin jiu shi</i> 《武林舊事》 (1274?)
Stories Farce? burlesque?	Stories a. love b. ghost c. marvels d. crime e. chivalry	Stories a. love b. ghost c. marvels d. crime e. chivalry	Stories
Historical Narration a. Three Kingdoms b. Five Dynasties	Historical Narration	Historical Narration a. General history b. Han c. Tang	Historical Narration
	Scriptural Narration Monastic Tales	Scriptural Narration Monastic Tales Scriptural Parodies?	Scriptural Narration Scriptural Parodies?
	Riddling Improvisations	Riddling Improvisations	

In Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China*, pp. 7-9.

³⁷ Adapted from Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China*, pp. 8-9.

Centers: the Cradle of Popular Fiction" (1974),³⁸ when the populace would seek entertainment in the evenings at the market place. A popular form of entertainment in the urban centres, especially in the capital, was being entertained by professional story-tellers who spun out tales of various kinds, with those of *xiaoshuo* 'dealing with love, ghosts, and marvels, with criminal investigations, all of which are stories of knives, cudgels, or rising in the world and reversals of fortune, and with "valorous knights" (stories of soldiers, horses, weapons and drums)' as recorded in the *Du cheng ji sheng* 《都城記勝》 [Guidebook of the capital city].³⁹ Prušek also affirms that 'these themes of the tales of adventures were closely akin to the tales of "iron knights," which means "things like soldiers, horses and the tumult of battles" [...].'⁴⁰ These *xiaoshuo* of adventure and chivalry certain prototypes of martial arts fiction, have influenced the development of this literary genre up to the present.

But James J.Y. Liu challenges Bishop's classification of Song story-tellers into four classes as well as Bishop's division of *xiaoshuo* into five types and Sun K'ai-ti's division of his *xiaoshuo* B into four types (see below).⁴¹ Liu points out that Luo Ye's 羅燁 *Zui weng tan lu* 《醉翁談錄》 [The intoxicated old man's gossip] (c. 1278), discovered in Japan in 1941, does not mention the *hesheng*, nor does it mention there were four types of narrators. Liu believes that Luo Ye's division of *xiaoshuo* in his *Zui weng tan lu* into eight categories has cleared up the confusion. Luo Ye subdivided fiction proper into eight categories, according to subject-matter: (1) *lingguai* 靈怪, the strange and miraculous; (2) *yanfen* 煙粉 female ghosts; (3) *chuanqi* 傳奇, romantic love stories; (4) *gongan* 公案, public cases or

³⁸ Jaroslav Prušek, 'Urban Centers: the Cradle of Popular Fiction', in *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres*, ed. by Cyril Birch (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 259-98, also in his 'The Beginnings of Popular Chinese Literature. Urban Centres the Cradle of Popular Fiction', in *Chinese History and Literature: Collections of Studies* (Prague: Academia, 1970), pp. 396-448.

³⁹ Quoted in Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China*, p. 8.

⁴⁰ Prušek, 'Urban Centers: Cradle of Popular Fiction', p. 294.

⁴¹ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 211, additional note 10. See also his additional note 11 on subdivision of fiction proper.

stories of crime and detection; (5) *budao* 扑刀, swords; (6) *ganbang* 杆棒, clubs or cudgels (7) *shenxian* 神仙, gods and immortals; and (8) *yaoshu* 妖術, magic or witchcraft.⁴² Under this classification scheme, chivalric tales, prototypes of contemporary martial arts fiction, were found in the "clubs or cudgels" category, with some in the "swords" and "public cases" categories as well.

The Ming scholar Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 (1551-1602) was one of the earliest few who actually attempted a classification of *xiaoshuo* genres.⁴³ He classified the *xiaoshuo* into six divisions: (1) *zhiguai* 誌怪, records of anomalies; (2) *chuanqi* 傳奇, prose romances; (3) *zalu* 雜錄, miscellaneous notes; (4) *congtao* 叢談, anecdotes; (5) *bianding* 辯訂, researches; and (6) *zhengui* 箴規, moral admonitions.⁴⁴ No mention is made of vernacular fiction, which was flourishing at the time. Hu's central criterion for classifying fiction is also not given.

It was only in the Qing Dynasty that a first major attempt at re-classifying *xiaoshuo* was undertaken. Chinese historians had always mixed the *xiaoshuo* genres with the miscellaneous narratives, which could be dated back to the "Yi wen zhi" 藝文志 [Treatise on the arts and writing] in the *Han shu* 漢書 [History of the Former Han dynasty]. Ji Yun's 紀昀 *Si hu quan shu* 四庫全書⁴⁵ divides *xiaoshuo* into three types by sorting out those *xiaoshuo* from the *zajia* 雜家 (miscellaneous narratives) which had previously been wrongly classified under history or philosophy; and also by removing those historical and philosophical texts which had previously been wrongly classified under the *zajia* with

⁴² Adapted from James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 107.

⁴³ Details on Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 are given in Sheldon Lu, pp. 50-52 and in Fan Yanqiao 范煙橋, *Zhongguo xiao shuo shi* 中國小說史 [A History of Chinese fiction], p. 338.

⁴⁴ These six subdivisions are found in Lu Xun, p. 6.

⁴⁵ Title of the complete collection of Chinese books consisting of four major categories, compiled during the Qing Dynasty.

which *xiaoshuo* had been classified as one. The three types are *zashi* 雜事 (miscellaneous writings), *yiwen* 異聞 (records of marvels), and *suoyu* 瑣語 (anecdotes).⁴⁶

Regarding how to categorize fictional works from the Six Dynasties through the May Fourth Movement of 1919 so as to bring out certain characteristic features of traditional Chinese fiction, Ma Yau-woon suggests one possibility is to divide fiction into stories and novels according to the physical form and chapter division. Thus, a story, irrespective of its length, is an unbroken narrative with no formal divisional device whereas novels are expected to be long, with formal chapter divisions. On the question of classifying fiction and its groupings in China, Ma reiterates that 'authorial intention and the physical form of the work involved must be considered.'⁴⁷

Patrick Hanan, like Ma Yau-woon, commenting on how to group the fifty pieces of so-called short stories and fifty-odd pieces of so-called novels existing in written versions by about 1550 into genres in his "The Early Chinese Short Story: A Critical Theory in Outline" (1967, reprinted 1974), remarks that:

Length is not, in itself, a primary criterion. Nor is the fact that some of the pieces are divided into chapters. For even those pieces which are not in chapters are sometimes divided into sections, each of which ends on a note of suspense, with a couplet or so speculating on what will happen next. The difference between this kind of informal subdivision and the formal division of the chapter is too technical a matter to base a classification upon.⁴⁸

Although Hanan and Ma do not seem to agree on chapter division as a formal criterion for dividing Chinese fiction into short stories and novels, they do agree that length in itself is not a primary criterion, unlike the division of fiction in the West. Hanan, however,

⁴⁶ These three categories of *xiaoshuo* are found in *ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴⁷ Ma Yau-woon, 'Fiction', p. 33.

⁴⁸ Hanan, 'The Early Chinese Short Story: A Critical Theory in Outline', pp. 313-14.

suggests that the most significant formal criterion is the organizing principle on which the works are built. Two fundamentally different kinds of plot -- all of one piece or a series of loosely linked segments -- can be distinguished in the works. Hanan called these polar types the *unitary plot* and the *system of linked plots*.⁴⁹ Each part in a unitary plot contributes significantly to the whole. Each plot in a system of linked plot is an almost perfect unitary plot in itself, and some of them could be deleted, by bridging the gap a little, without adversely affecting the story. In certain works, a superstructure controls the various systems of linked plots. According to Hanan, novels are to be classified as systems of linked plots, while short stories 'can by no means all be thought of as having unitary plots.'⁵⁰ The movement of the unitary plot is circular while the linked-plot system linear. Hanan points out that the broad distinction between "linked" and "unitary" is a distinction of form and on Northrop Frye's scale of "modes" in narrative forms, the linked works stand higher than the unitary works taken as a group.⁵¹ Hanan's "system of linked plots" and its attendant characteristics would appear useful in explaining the episodic nature and the sequence of events in linear movement of traditional Chinese novels. Compared to Ma

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 314. The differences between the unitary plot and the system of linked plots are found on pp. 314-20.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 315.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 318-19. Northrop Frye's scale of "modes" in narrative forms, much abridged, is found on the same pages:

Fictions, therefore, may be classified, not morally, but by the hero's power of action, which may be greater than ours, or roughly the same. Thus:

1. If superior in *kind* to other men and to the environment of other men, the hero is a divine being, and the story about him will be a *myth* in the common sense of a story about god....
2. If superior in *degree* to other men and to his environment, the hero is a typical hero of *romance*, whose actions are marvellous but who is himself identified as a human being....
3. If superior in degree to other men but not to his environment, the hero is a leader. He has authority, passions and powers of expression far greater than ours, but what he does is subject both to social criticism and to the order of nature. This is the hero of the *high mimetic* mode, of most epic and tragedy....
4. If superior neither to other men nor to his environment, the hero is one of us; we respond to a sense of his common humanity, and demand from the poet the same canons of probability that we find in our own experience. This gives us the hero of the *low mimetic* mode, of most comedy and realistic fiction....
5. If inferior in power and intelligence to ourselves, so that we have the sense of looking down on a scene of bondage, frustration and absurdity, the hero belongs to the *ironic* mode....

Yau-woon's using physical form and chapter division to divide Chinese fiction into short stories and novels, a method very clearcut which allows no overlapping of the two groups, Hanan's choice of plot as organising principle fails as yet to demarcate distinctly short stories and novels. One thing certain is that those with unitary plots are short stories and they cannot be novels. Novels are linked-plot works. But works showing linked plots may include novels as well as short stories. Thus, using both Ma's and Hanan's criteria to distinguish the *xiaoshuo* genre into short stories and novels, one would be more likely to find novels, to which martial arts fiction belong, to be divided into chapters with linked plots, episodic with a superstructure that controls the various sequences of events which move in a linear fashion.

The division between the story and the novel having been established, based on physical form and chapter division, Ma Yau-woon then suggests that traditional stories be classified according to length, language, form, period, and context into (1) *biji* 筆記, note-form jottings popular from the Six Dynasties to the early Republican days; (2) *chuanqi* 傳奇, stories written in classical language, usually on unusual events, popular in the Tang and Song Dynasties; (3) *bianwen* 變文, popularized Buddhist stories of the Tang and Five Dynasties, found in the Dunhuang caves; (4) *huaben* 話本, vernacular stories or story-tellers' prompt-books originating from professional story-tellers of Song and Ming Dynasties; and (5) *gongan* 公案, stories of crime cases solved by legal, and sometimes detective, means, or more specifically referring to a collection of stories labelled as *gongan* in the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty.⁵²

Regarding the classification of novels, Ma points out that the demarcation is even less clearcut. He did not attempt to come up with a classification for novels. Instead, he

⁵² Ma Yau-woon, 'Fiction', p. 34. See also the five forms of the *xiaoshuo* genre in Ma and Lau, eds., pp. xxi-xxiv. But the traditional Chinese stories in their book do not follow the five forms suggested. Instead, they are classified according to popular stereotypes, e.g. the selfless friend, the knight-errant, the self-proclaimed hero, the ingrate, the heartless lover, the dedicated lover, the reunited couple, the femme fatale, the superhuman maiden, the ghost wife, the almost fortunate man, the faithless seeker, the dream adventurer, the archetypal questing man, the judge, the detective, the master thief, and the trickster.

pointed out the inadequacies of the system proposed by Sun K'ai-ti 孫楷第 in his *Zhongguo tong su xiao shuo shu mu* 《中國通俗小說書目》 [A bibliography of popular Chinese fiction] (1957) in which post-Yuan novels, along with colloquial-story collections are grouped into:

- 1) *Jiangshi* 講史 (historical novels)
- 2) *Xiaoshuo* 小說 B (A was used for stories and story collection) for non-historical novels are divided into:
 - i) *yanfen* 煙粉 (romantic novels), with five subdivisions:
 - a) *renqing* 人情 (novels of manners)
 - b) *xiaxie* 狎邪 (novels about brothels)
 - c) *caizi jiaren* 才子佳人 (beau-and-beauty novels)
 - d) *yingxiong ernu* 英雄兒女 (knight-errant novels)
 - e) *weixie* 猥褻 (pornographic novels)
 - ii) *lingguai* 靈怪 (novels of the supernatural)
 - iii) *shuo gongan* 說公案 (chivalry / or detective novels), with two subdivisions:
 - a) *xiayi* 俠義 (novels of the heroic)
 - b) *jingcha* 精察 (detective novels)
 - iv) *fengyu* 諷諭 (allegorical novels), with two subdivisions:
 - a) *fengci* 諷刺 (novels of satire)
 - b) *quanjie* 勸戒 (novels of admonition)⁵³

Sun's classification of novels shows that two main groups are drawn up on the grounds of whether or not they belong to historical or non-historical novels. History has always influenced the development of Chinese novels, with story-tellers, and later vernacular novel writers drawing extensively on historical events or materials. Even contemporary martial arts fiction writers have preserved this tradition of drawing their materials from history. It can be argued that this classification of *xiaoshuo* into historical or non-historical is based more on content than on form. Andrew Plaks seems to be elaborating on Sun's classification when he remarks:

The major observable difference that conspicuously separates the two branches of Chinese narrative is the simple fact that historiography (and historical fiction) deals

⁵³ Adapted from Sun K'ai-ti 孫楷第, *Zhongguo tong su xiao shuo shu mu* 《中國通俗小說書目》 [A Bibliography of popular Chinese fiction], as found in Ma Yau-woon, 'Fiction', p. 34.

primarily with affairs of state and *public life* -- military, political, diplomatic, court-related -- while fiction takes up the slack to cover the more individualized and intimate details of the *private lives* of figures of varying roles or status.⁵⁴

It is more often content categories rather than formal genres that determine the classification of narrative composition in traditional China. Plaks believes that:

As a result, the recurrent critical practice of drawing content categories within the sphere of fiction, a practice that runs counter to certain basic assumptions of Western genre theory, but that underlies numerous traditional descriptions of Chinese fiction [...] seems to be in tune with the traditional perception of narrative art.⁵⁵

This perhaps also explains why traditional critics of Chinese fiction have not felt the need to distinguish between the novel and other (shorter) forms within the general term for prose fiction *xiaoshuo*.

Sun classifies certain prototypes of martial arts fiction under two distinct subdivisions. The "knight-errant novels" belong to a subdivision of the romantic novels while the "novels of the heroic" to a subdivision of the chivalry /or detective novels. What both types of novels share in common is that they both are labelled as non-historical novels even though they draw heavily on historical events. Sun's division of *xiaoshuo* into two large groups -- *xiaoshuo* A (stories and story collections) and *xiaoshuo* B (non-historical novels) further shows that the term *xiaoshuo* includes both stories and novels, making no distinction between the two. What distinguishes *xiaoshuo* as a literary genre is its being "non-historical" in nature. Andrew Plaks seems to be concurring with Sun when he claims that 'the term *hsiao-shuo* 小說 as applied by Lu Xun 鲁迅 and other modern scholars -- although its range of meaning does go well beyond the specific province of vernacular fiction -- remains limited to writing that is for one reason or another implausible from the

⁵⁴ Andrew Plaks, 'Towards A Critical Theory of Chinese Narrative', in *Chinese Narrative: Critical and Theoretical Essays*, ed. by Andrew Plaks (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 309-52 (p. 318).

⁵⁵ Ibid.

historical point of view',⁵⁶ which Ma preferred to call "imaginative reality". Ma's conception of *xiaoshuo* differs from Sun at least in one respect. To both Ma and Sun, *xiaoshuo* can be taken to embrace both stories and novels, but Ma suggests that the physical form and chapter division be used to further distinguish stories as *xiaoshuo* from novels as *xiaoshuo*. To Sun, it is the "non-historical point of view" that distinguishes certain stories and novels as *xiaoshuo*.

Even though Ma found Sun's classification problematic, he still maintained that Sun's classification was detailed enough to capture the diversity of the fiction genre. Chinese literature being an unrelated tradition, Ma sees the limitation of Western critical methods applied to Chinese novels for he argues:

What needs to be done next is not the application of Western critical methods to Chinese novels, as the comparatists advocate, but a careful reading of the lesser known Chinese novels to identify their distinguishable or even unique features. Western theories can best be, on occasion, suggestive and inspirational to the student of the Chinese novel, but they do not seem to be able to provide a universal or model as some critics have claimed.⁵⁷

Like Ma, David. H. Malone had also argued against the application of Western literary criticism to literatures of the Eastern traditions. In his article "Cultural Assumptions and Western Literary Criticism" (1976), Malone considers it wrong that:

We in the West and many scholars in the East perhaps readily assume that the models of literary history, analysis, and criticism which have been developed over twenty-five hundred years of western literary study should be used as the basis for studying the literatures of non-western civilizations.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 310.

⁵⁷ Ma Yau-woon, 'Fiction', p. 35.

⁵⁸ David H. Malone, 'Cultural Assumptions and Western Literary Criticism', *Tamkang Review*, 6.2/7.1 (1975-1976), 55-67 (p. 57).

It follows from Malone that Chinese fiction should be explained on its own terms and within its own traditions if a full appreciation of the genre is to be gained.

Lin Yutang 林語堂 also attempted a classification of Chinese novels in the 1930s. In his book *My Country and my People* (1936), Lin claims that briefly, Chinese novels may be classified into the following types, according to their contents, supplying a well-known representative work for each:

1. Novel of adventure: *The Water Margin*
2. Supernatural novel or tale of wonder: *Monkey*
3. Historical novel: *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*
4. Love romance: *Dream of the Red Chamber*
5. Pornographic novel: *Golden Lotus*
6. Novel of social satire: *The Unofficial History of the Literati*
7. Novel of ideas: *The Karma of the Mirrored Flowers*
8. Novel of social manners: *Strange Things of the Last Twenty Years*⁵⁹

Lin grouped these eight types more or less in their order of popular influence. Martial arts fiction, that had long attained its peak of popularity in China in the 1930's, seems to be missing from his classification. But this is not the case, as he goes on to explain, 'a catalogue of common novels in "circulating libraries" on the street would show that novels of adventure, in Chinese called "novels of chivalry," easily top the list.'⁶⁰ It would appear that Lin includes it under novel of adventure, as *The Water Margin* has often been considered an early prototype of martial arts fiction. It can be argued that one of the reasons why martial arts fiction as a distinctive genre was missing from his list is to be attributed to its low status and poor literary quality. The fact is that martial arts fiction still had not yet been recognized. It is also clear that Lin had drawn up his list based on recognized works only. Lin admits that he found a strict classification difficult. According to him, the *Golden Lotus*, for instance, 'although four-fifths pornographic, is probably the best novel of social manners in its ruthless and vivid portrayal of common characters, the

⁵⁹ Lin Yutang, p. 260.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 261.

gentry and the "local rich," and particularly of the position of women in Chinese society of the Ming period.⁶¹ He also adds that to these novels proper should have been added tales and short stories in the broad sense, which have a very long tradition. Lin's division of Chinese fiction adopted essentially the story-novel classifications which Ma also adopted almost fifty years later, although Lin made no mention of how he would distinguish stories from novels, or if he would make that distinction at all. The overriding guideline for drawing up his classification is popular influence, not "from the historical point of view" that Sun and Plaks adopted a few decades later.

In 1981, in his book *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China*, while commenting on the complexity of the novel tradition in China, Robert Hegel maintains that 'even now Chinese scholars, whether Marxists or not tend to avoid the more tenable thesis that the novel, at least in its highest development, was an upper-class literary form.'⁶² And on the style and content of this literary form meant for the segment of the elite called the "literati" or "scholar gentry" up until the seventeenth century, Hegel has further to add:

During the seventeenth century the novel tradition was a respected vehicle for serious artistic experimentation and intellectual expression among those already proficient in other, more conventional, literary forms; and that certain writers utilized the novel to address pressing questions concerning the meaning of human existence.⁶³

Thus, according to Hegel, the novel in its highest development, at least up until the seventeenth century, was a literary form constituting only one tradition, confined only to the educated elite. Up until then, Classical Chinese was used in penning this genre. Some writers had used this literary form as a vehicle for expressing their views on controversial philosophical issues. Either Hegel seems to be emphasizing yet another aspect in the

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 260.

⁶² Robert E. Hegel, *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), p. 3.

⁶³ Ibid.

development of novels in China or describing a newly evolved type of literary form within the novel tradition, one bereft of its "plebeian origins", lacking in oral traditions, and confined only to the elite literati. According to him, the novel tradition bifurcated into two levels of development in later times:

Recently scholars writing in the West have speculated that particularly in its later development during the Ch'ing, the Chinese novel constituted two separate traditions at quite different levels of language and artistry. One is the 'scholarly novel' or the 'literary novel'; the other is characterized by the popular 'swordsman fiction' (*wu-hsia hsiao-shuo*), the 'chapbook tradition'.⁶⁴

It follows from Hegel that the novel developed into two distinct types -- the scholarly and the popular -- during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), adding to the complexity of how Chinese fiction should be defined. It also follows from Hegel, in the eyes of the Western scholars, at least up until the 1980s, the term designated for *wuxia xiaoshuo* 武俠小說 was "swordsman fiction", so labelled because it recounts the adventurous tales of swordsmen. Here, one could already see how scholars in the West unwittingly assigned the so-called swordsman fiction to a literary position diametrically opposite to the so-called scholarly novel within the Chinese literary system. The differentiating literary attributes lie with the different levels of language and aesthetic qualities which catered to two different social groups at the time. Swordsman fiction, though considered popular, is viewed in a rather negative light, as Hegel further explains:

"Popular" novels (ambiguous as that term may be. I refer to those of considerably less intellectual seriousness and self-conscious artistry than the works to be discussed in this study) often did appear in cheap, poorly printed editions with narratives that concentrate on action rather than ideas; significantly, they tend to be less moralistic -- and less colloquial in style -- than the more dignified works of the form.⁶⁵

Additional distinguishing features brought to bear on swordsman fiction are their sub-standard moral content, poor format, cheap production, and low intellect that appeals more

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 264, note 8.

to the sensory organs than to the mind. They represent works normally shunned by traditional scholars.

Again, to fully appreciate what the *xiaoshuo* traditions are, the status of *xiaoshuo* within the Chinese literary system is to be viewed against the fact that in taking up Chinese literature, a distinction is made between literature that instructs and literature that pleases. According to Lin Yutang, the former is literature that is "the vehicle of truth" while the latter is literature that is "the expression of emotion"; the first type is "objective and expository", while the second type is "subjective and lyrical"; and the former is considered to possess greater value than the latter as it improves people's minds and uplifts society's morals. Thus novels and drama are looked down upon as 'little arts, unworthy to enter the Hall of Great Literature'.⁶⁶

Eugene Eoyang, the Chinese American scholar, also reminds us that 'the prevailing attitude toward fiction in China through the years is well known. Among the literati, the attitude was defensive when it was not condescending. *Xiaoshuo* 小說, "small talk," seems to put fiction in its place.'⁶⁷ Modern scholars and writers of the pre-Communist period have found Chinese traditional novels profoundly disappointing.⁶⁸ Mao Dun 茅盾, a major contemporary writer, always deplored the old novel and declared that he had no personal use for it. He even regards the narrative techniques of *The Water Margin* and the *Dream*

⁶⁶ Lin Yutang, p. 203.

⁶⁷ Eoyang, 'A Taste for Apricots: Approaches to Chinese Fiction', p. 53.

⁶⁸ This feeling of profound disappointment among modern scholars and writers of the pre-Communist era was at first fused with a sense of national shame, but it later developed into an honest admission of the artistic inferiority of the Chinese traditional novel compared to the Western novel. But the Communists eventually rejected this view by playing up its national importance. Traditional popular literature was affirmed as one of the "national forms" of literature by Mao Zedong in 1939, upheld against the Western tradition of critical realism and modern Chinese writing influenced by the West. Popular literature was re-affirmed in the wake of a new militant nationalism, made possible only by the active repudiation of the Western influence, in C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 5. See also Fan Yanqiao 范煙橋, *Zhongguo xiao shuo shi* 《中國小說史》 [A History of Chinese fiction], pp. 3-4 on the status of *xiaoshuo* in the Chinese literary system.

of the *Red Chamber* as too elementary for modern imitation.⁶⁹ Of the ten kinds of deplorable literature listed by Zhou Zuoren 周作人 in his influential essay "Humane Literature" (1919), most were identifiable primarily with popular fiction and drama rather than with the classical genres of poetry and prose.⁷⁰ Of course, the artistic qualities of traditional Chinese novels has nothing much to recommend. As C.T. Hsia also reminds us:

Despite his zeal for research in the Chinese novel, Hu Shih himself recognized its artistic inferiority even though he appeared much less perturbed by its "feudalistic" thought. In his prefaces to novels as well as his more general essays on vernacular literature we find a series of asides expressive of his critical attitudes.⁷¹

On the artistic inferiority of Chinese traditional novels, Hsia claims that until the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, few defended the Chinese traditional novels for its intrinsic literary excellence, including the most dedicated students of traditional fiction as well as the most talented writers of modern Chinese fiction.⁷² The general disgust and impatience shared by other conscientious students of Chinese traditional novels led Cheng Chen-to 鄭振鐸, a great historian of vernacular literature interested in acquiring rare editions of traditional novels, to admit his disapproval of these works at times:

Some six or seven years ago I had the ambition to prepare a whole series of summaries of Chinese novels and did contribute twenty-odd such précis to the *Appreciation Weekly* (*Chien-shang Chou-k'an*), a Shanghai publication. But after writing continually for five or six weeks, I felt really discouraged and could not continue. All those shallow and stupid novels of interminable length, they really couldn't get me interested. And I haven't written about them since.⁷³

⁶⁹ Quoted in C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 5.

⁷⁰ C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, pp. 3-4.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Cheng Chen-to 鄭振鐸, I, 478, quoted in *ibid.*

The condescending attitude towards novels is captured both in the beginning and at the end of one of Chinese literary masterpieces, the *Dream of the Red Chamber*, as Lin Yutang describes in his *My Country and my People* (1936):

Characteristic of this attitude [condescending attitude towards novels] are the beginning and ending of Red Chamber Dream. A Taoist monk found the story inscribed on a huge rock [...]. The Taoist monk copied the story from the rock inscriptions, and when it came to Ts'ao Hsüehch'in's hands he worked at it for ten years and revised it five times, dividing it into chapters, and he wrote a verse on it:

These pages tell of babbling nonsense,
A string of sad tears they conceal,
They all laugh at the author's folly;
But who could know its magic appeal?

At the end of the story, [...] the same Taoist monk reappeared. This monk is said to have copied the story again and one day he came to the author's study and put the manuscripts in his care. Ts'ao Hsüehch'in replied, laughingly: 'This is only babbling nonsense. It is good for killing time with a few good friends after a wine-feast or while chatting under the lamp-light. If you ask me how I happen to know the hero of the story, and want all the details, you are taking it too seriously.' Hearing what he said, the monk threw the manuscripts down on his table and went away laughing, tossing his head and mumbling as he went: 'Really it contains only babbling nonsense. Both the author himself and the man who copies it, as well as its readers, do not know what is behind it all. This is only a literary pastime, written for pleasure and self-satisfaction.' And it is said that, later on, someone wrote the following verse on it:

When the story is sad and touching,
The sadder is its tomfoolery.
But we are all in the same dream,
Do not sneer at its buffoonery.⁷⁴

The beginning and the end of the *Dream of the Red Chamber* convey the kind of attitude scholars held for novels in the past. Almost all novels were anonymous as Chinese novelists were too ashamed to put their names down in their works. They were afraid to let people know that they could condescend to such a thing as writing novels.⁷⁵ Only as late

⁷⁴ Lin Yutang, pp. 255-56.

⁷⁵ On p. 255, *ibid.*, Lin Yutang relates the case of a comparatively recent novel *Ye sou bao yan* 《野叟曝言》, written by Xia Erming 夏二銘 in the eighteenth century. Like all traditional scholars, his original essays, beautiful poetry, and many other travel and biographical sketches were brought out in a

as 1917 did Hu Shi establish and clarify the true authorship of the *Dream of the Red Chamber*.

James J. Lu concurs with other critics that despite much versification found in Chinese novels, the novel as a genre was not regarded as "poetic" or "decent" or "serious" reading material for "the intellectual and moral benefit of people" up until the twentieth century.⁷⁶ Commenting on the different attitudes of traditional critics towards novels and lyric poetry, James J. Lu makes the following accusation:

So, like streetside storytelling, the novel as a genre was treated as, to use a Chinese phrase, 'hsia-li pa-jen' 下里巴人 (stuff of low taste for entertainment), if not as 'poisonous weed'. Lyric poetry, on the other hand, stood as 'yang ch'un pao-hsieh' 陽春白雪 (pure and highbrow art), and was designated as a predominant form in government examinations. Focusing on famous poets, traditional criticism largely ignored the existence and positive roles of novelists.⁷⁷

James J. Lu has, in fact, drawn in an ideological factor, which helps also to account for the inferior status of the novel genre in Chinese history. Two classical Chinese novels, *Jin ping mei* 《金瓶梅》, [The golden lotus], and *Shuo yue quan shu* 《說岳全書》, [The complete tale of Yue Fei], have been labelled as "pornographic" or "subversive" and suffered official censorship. Some Chinese classical novels have also been banned for political reasons.⁷⁸ The disadvantage suffered by Chinese novels caused James J. Lu to lament, 'it is ironic that we have more detailed biographical accounts of Chinese T'ang and

collection, the *Huan yu xuan ji* 《浣玉軒集》. But he had also written the novel *Ye sou bao yan* 《野叟曝言》. When his grandson reprinted the *Huan yu xuan ji* 《浣玉軒集》 in 1890 in order to perpetuate Xia's name, he dared not or would not, anyway did not, include the novel, even though it was considered Xia's best literary work.

⁷⁶ James J. Lu, p. 121.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 122.

⁷⁸ Ma Tai-loi points out that of the Chinese traditional novels banned during the reign of Emperor Qianlong (1722-1788), no erotic novel was included. They were banned solely for political reason as Emperor Qianlong was determined to stamp out anti-Manchu sentiments in the empire. For details, see Ma Tai-loi, 'Novels Prohibited in the Literary Inquisition of Emperor Ch'ien-lung', in *Critical Essays on Chinese Fiction*, ed. by Winston L.Y. Yang and Curtis P. Adkins (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1980), pp. 201-12.

Sung poets than we have of Ming and Ch'ing novelists who lived centuries closer to our time.⁷⁹ As a result, many popular novels written before the nineteenth century continue to remain anonymous despite arduous efforts to identify their authors.

Political and ideological factors aside, the low status of novels was also linked to Confucian ideals in traditional China in the same way that the high status of poetry was linked to Confucian ideals. As James J. Lu asserts:

In China, traditional stylistics was based on Confucian ideals. Confucius spent his lifetime compiling the *Book of Odes*. In the *Analects*, he repeatedly mentions the book and persuades his disciples to study the poems in it. He believes that good poetry can help purify one's thought, give one healthy pleasure, and inspire one to become a virtuous person.⁸⁰

Owing to Confucius' teachings, lyric poetry soon became a dominant genre in Chinese literature and continued to enjoy its status as a prestigious literary form till the present times. Contrasting the status of novels to that of poetry, James J. Lu remarks:

In contrast, the novel, especially to Confucian moralists, was something hard to appreciate. To them, the novel was associated too closely with the "ugly" aspects of society and individual personality to be pleasant, and too filled with the vernacular to be textually refined.⁸¹

Sheldon Lu suggests that the low status of *xiaoshuo* in Chinese culture can partly be attributed to the element of fabrication it putatively contains. He links it to what Confucius said in the *Analect*, where:

Confucius expressed his respect for facts, for verification, and for what happened actually rather than hypothetically. He pronounced himself reluctant to speak of the afterlife, spiritual entities, the strange, the supernatural, violence, and anomalies Confucius proclaimed himself a transmitter of cultural and literary legacies rather than

⁷⁹ James J. Lu, p. 123.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

a creator *Hsiao-shuo* has been identified with unfounded fabrications, rumors, and gossips (*tao-t'ing t'u-shuo* [道聽途說]). Fiction as such is deceitful and dangerous, for as the Master said, "The gossip-monger (*tao-t'ing erh t'u-shuo* [道聽而途說]) is the outcast of virtue."⁸²

Likewise, the content, language, and audience of novels were also to be blamed. The negative attitudes towards Chinese novels could possibly be attributed to their tendency to expose the dark side of society and personality, using language spoken by people from all walks of life, including monks, prostitutes and beggars. Not to be dismissed is the audience factor. The fact that it was usually the rustic poor who made up the listening public to streetside or marketplace oral story-telling provided traditional critics yet another plausible cause to view the novel even more negatively.

James J. Lu believes it was the lower status of the novel that attracted the label *xiaoshuo*, as he points out, 'the fact that the Japanese and Chinese novel traditionally has a lower status than the lyric poem -- may be why the novel is called *xiaoshuo*, 'small talk' in Chinese and Japanese.'⁸³ Here, one would tend to disagree. He could be right in observing that the Chinese novel traditionally does have a lower status than the lyric poem, as has already been pointed out by other critics.⁸⁴ It could be argued whether this fact in itself could be taken to mean that owing to its lower status, therefore the Chinese novel has acquired the generic name *xiaoshuo*. Perhaps, it could be the other way round. The fact that the genre in question has been called "*xiaoshuo*", therefore, bespeaks its lower status within the Chinese literary system, as observed by many other critics.⁸⁵

⁸² Sheldon Lu, p. 41.

⁸³ James L. Lu, p. 113.

⁸⁴ Critics holding this view include Lu Xun, p. 3; Eoyang, 'A Taste for Apricots: Approaches to Chinese Fiction', p. 53; Ma and Lau, eds, p. xx; Adrian Hsia, 'The Popular Novel in Nineteenth-Century China', p. 461; and Nienhauser, 'The Origin of Chinese Fiction', p. 191.

⁸⁵ See note 3 above.

Although the prestige of traditional novels has been affirmed in the last few decades after adopting a new designation "the classic Chinese novel" (*Zhongguo gudian xiaoshuo* 中國古典小說), they are still more objectively called "the chapter-divided novel" (*zhanghui xiaoshuo* 章回小說). C.T. Hsia reminds us that 'the term retains a tinge of condescension, implying that the traditional method of composition -- to divide a novel into a large number of chapters without caring whether each is a coherent unit of narrative -- is no longer fit for modern imitation.'⁸⁶ This vernacular literature of old China was once dubbed "the old fiction" (*jiu xiaoshuo* 舊小說), to distinguish it from "the modern fiction" (*xin xiaoshuo* 新小說), novels produced under Western influence.

In *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies. Popular Fiction in Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Cities* (1981), Perry Link identifies several features that point to the growing resemblance between popular fiction in the early decades of the Republican Era and popular fiction in the West. One major feature of popular fiction presents itself in 'readily understandable form' and another key to popular fiction seems to be 'predominance of action and a corresponding de-emphasis of description.'⁸⁷ He further points out that 'the emphasis on action seems related to a basic purpose of stimulating and holding the attention of readers who perhaps suffer elsewhere in life from boredom or exhaustion.'⁸⁸ He termed the two sources of stimulation 'immediate pursuit of interest' and 'the predilection for the weird or unexpected', one or both of which should be present in popular fiction produced in Shanghai during that period.⁸⁹ Modern martial arts fiction, as a subgenre of the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School, attained an unprecedented peak of popularity in Chinese cities in the early twentieth century. Despite its wide appeal to Chinese readers, Chinese fiction,

⁸⁶ C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 2

⁸⁷ Perry E. Link, *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies. Popular Fiction in Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Cities* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1981), p. 185.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 186.

particularly traditional fiction to which martial arts fiction belongs, does not seem to find acceptance in the West. This literary phenomenon will be taken up in the next chapter.

Chapter Two

Chinese Fiction in the Eyes of the West

Bishop believes that it was through the agency of the *Jin gu qi guan* 《今古奇觀》 [Stories old and new], a very popular collection of stories in China which appeared sometime between 1633 and 1644, that the *xiaoshuo* was translated into Western languages and introduced into Europe.¹

Commenting on the status of Chinese novels in his article "An Hour with a Chinese Romance" way back in 1873, Alfred Lister considered it 'a trifler on the very outskirts of Chinese literature -- of all literature [...]. The best that I can offer [...] is that poultice to the brain, as one of our Reviews calls it, a novel.'² Despite its low status, Chinese novels were greatly enjoyed by the Chinese, even by the uneducated, as Lister aptly observes:

It is a great mistake to suppose that all written Chinese is intelligible to every native who can read. Anything but the most elementary composition goes completely over the head of your ordinary tradesman or servant. Nevertheless, the reading of a page of characters, the sense of which he does not in the least apprehend, is a great pleasure to a Chinese. He likes the ring and the roll of it, just as rustics like big words in a sermon.³

Lister then points out that it was the educated who read Chinese novels with spirit and understanding. Even though the educated read them on the sly, they derived great pleasure from such reading. The Chinese were rather ashamed of their novels for a different reason, as Lister observes, 'Not as we ought to be of ours, because the bulk of them are degradingly

¹ *Jin gu qi guan* 《今古奇觀》 [Stories old and new] is an important anthology of forty stories selected from the *San yan er pai* 三言二拍 collections. Stories from these collections were translated into English, German, and French back in the 1820s. A list of stories translated into different European languages beginning in the early nineteenth-century is found in Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China*, pp. 128-35.

² Alfred Lister made this comment in a lecture delivered in S. Andrew Hall, Hong Kong, January 7, 1873. His lecture appeared as 'An Hour with A Chinese Romance', *China Review*, 1 (1872-1873), 284-93, 352-62 (p. 284).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

silly and very insidiously immoral, but only because they are trifling.⁴ The mixed attitudes of scholars and other Chinese towards Chinese novels as described by Lister were:

You may easily imagine, therefore, that a native scholar would be rather ashamed of writing a novel, and that his countrymen are equally somewhat ashamed of reading it. The common name for Romances is *Trifling Stories*, and most authors have not cared to put their names to them. Nevertheless, all who can read novels do read them, being careful at the same time to explain that they do so, not for the story, but for the admirable style in which many Romances are written.⁵

Lister considered this condescending attitude of scholars towards Chinese novels could partly be attributed to the lack of recognition of the healthfulness of play. Chinese traditions demand that scholars be grave, or they will not command respect and their learning will not be sound.

E. W. Thwing, a compatriot of Lister, also commented on the status of Chinese fiction over a century ago. Chinese fiction was included under the general term of *xiaoshuo* 小說, as Thwing observed in his article 'Chinese Fiction' (1896-97).⁶ However, he emphasized the importance of this subject to the student as it certainly made Chinese studies more interesting since Classics tended to be dry and hard, and the many tales and legends found in Chinese fiction would bring a pleasant change. Thwing quotes Alexander Wylie, a student of Chinese, who gave good testimony as to the importance of Chinese fiction then:

The novels and romances of the Chinese are too important as a class to be overlooked. The insight they give to the national manners and customs of various ages, the specimens they furnish of an ever-changing language, the fact of this being the only channel through which a large portion of the people gain their knowledge of history, and the influence which they must consequently exercise in the formation of character,

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ E. W. Thwing, 'Chinese Fiction', *China Review*, 22.6 (1896-97), 758-64 (p. 759).

are reasons too weighty to be left out of account, notwithstanding the prejudices of scholars on the subject.⁷

Despite its being scorned by scholars at the turn of the century, Chinese fiction did perform a pedagogical function in imparting useful cultural knowledge to foreign students, as well as educating the masses.

Almost one hundred years have passed, the contemporary sense of *xiaoshuo* is generally compatible with the English term "fiction".⁸ But back in the 1930s, Hu Huaichen 胡懷琛 alerted readers to the distinction between the term *xiaoshuo* and the meanings of "short story" and "novel" as found in the West. According to Hu,

In fact, the kind of *xiaoshuo* now popular in China is known as "short story" and "novel" in the West. Both types have never been found in China before. None of the *xiaoshuo* originally found in China can claim an identical totality with either of the two. Thus, we know that the term *xiaoshuo* is a borrowed term for "short story" and "novel", which definitely is not an appropriate label.⁹

It follows from Hu that applying the old term *xiaoshuo* for the new types of "short story" and "novel" imported from the West, but already popular in China in the 1930s, would imply that the meaning of *xiaoshuo* had come to embrace additional new forms, with its meaning not only confined to writings produced originally in China. It would also imply that the term *xiaoshuo* needed to be re-defined.

Although *xiaoshuo* is generally translated into "fiction", *xiaoshuo* is only an approximation to Western "fiction", never an equivalent. Perhaps Victor Mair can help to clarify some of

⁷ Quoted in Thwing, p. 759.

⁸ William H. Nienhauser, Jr. et others, eds. *Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), p. 425.

⁹ Hu Huaichen 胡懷琛, pp. 47-48. My own translation. The original reads: 現在中國所流行的小說，就是西洋的 Short story (短篇小說)和 Novel (現代小說)，但這兩種都是中國以前所沒有的。中國原有的小說，沒有一種能夠和這兩種中任何一種完全相同。因此，可知小說二字的名稱，在現代拿來指 Short story 和 Novel 都是借用的，決不是一個確切相當的名稱。

the meanings embedded in the Chinese term *xiaoshuo* and dissect the differences between Chinese notions of *xiaoshuo* and Western ideas of "fiction" as he remarks:

[The] Chinese term for 'fiction' is *hsiao-shuo* (literally, 'small talk' or 'minor talk'). This immediately points to a fundamental contrast with the English word which is derived ultimately from the past participle of Latin *ingere* ('to form' or 'to fashion,' 'to invent'). Where the Chinese term etymologically implies a kind of gossip or anecdote, the English word indicates something made up or created by an author or writer. '*Hsiao-shuo*' imports something, not of particularly great moment, that is presumed actually to have happened; 'fiction' suggests something an author dreamed up in his mind. By calling his work 'fiction,' an author expressly disclaims that it directly reflects real events and people; when a literary piece is declared to be '*hsiao-shuo*,' we are given to understand that it is gossip or report. For this reason, many recorders of *hsiao-shuo* are at great pains to tell us exactly from whom, when, where, and in what circumstances they heard their stories.¹⁰

In the West, Chinese fiction meriting academic attention dates back only a few decades. Hanan examined this phenomenon in his article "The Development of Fiction and Drama" (1964), explaining that:

Their [Chinese fiction's and drama's] isolation is one cause of our present lack of knowledge about them. Another more important cause is the low esteem in which they were traditionally held by Chinese scholars. In contrast with other genres, to which a vast amount of scholarly energy was devoted, the novel in particular remained largely unstudied and unvalued as late as the first decades of this century. Since then, detailed research on both fiction and drama has had some impressive achievements to its credit, but in the main these have not yet been made accessible to the Western reader. All he has at his disposal is some successful translations, mostly of fiction, a few specialist studies, and not much besides. Small wonder if he cannot form any complete picture of the nature or development of either genre.¹¹

In the main, Hanan attributes the cause of the lack of knowledge of Chinese fiction among Western readers in the sixties to the isolation of the literary tradition itself; its low esteem held by traditional Chinese scholars; and the inaccessibility of research to the West, thus

¹⁰ Victor Mair, 'The Narrative Revolution in Chinese Literature: Ontological Presuppositions', *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*, 5 (1983), 1-26 (pp. 21-22).

¹¹ Hanan, 'The Development of Fiction and Drama', pp. 115-16.

preventing them from fully appreciating the *xiaoshuo* as a literary genre within the Chinese literary polysystem.

John Bishop, researching also into Chinese fiction in the fifties, examined the question from a different angle. He wondered why Western readers felt disappointed upon reading those works which have been a continuous source of delight to the Chinese. Bishop may perhaps find Lister's remarks helpful. Back in 1873 Lister had already described the Western reader's response to Chinese fiction. He considered Chinese fiction 'insufferably tedious and lengthy historical novels, servile repetitions, everlasting fights described each time exactly in the same words, and intolerable spinning out to volume after volume, drive the foreign reader to despair.'¹²

Lister's remarks about the much-vaunted *Hao qiu zhuan* 《好逑傳》, or *The Fortunate Union* as translated into English by Sir John Davis, that the work was 'in itself an excessively stupid story, not worthy of the conscientious trouble and elegant scholarship he has spent on it. The stock dish, as I may term it, of English translation from Chinese fiction, it is as far inferior to my subject of to-night [...]'¹³ seemed to be supported by Thwing some twenty years later, as Thwing made the following remarks on the same novel

There is often much sameness and repetition in these stories. In this one the heroine, of marvellous beauty, is all the time getting into trouble, and then by her own wisdom and discretion, or by the help of the valiant hero, who always appears at the right moment, she triumphs over her enemies. This same thing happening several times becomes tiresome.¹⁴

It would appear that foreign readers' impression of Chinese novels in the late nineteenth century was rather negative. This can again be affirmed by how Lister described what the

¹² Lister, p. 286.

¹³ Ibid., p. 287.

¹⁴ Thwing, p. 763.

Chinese considered to be the romance of all romances, the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* as 'a semi-veracious chronicle of just one century of anarchy and confusion -- the Chinese Wars of Roses -- in the second and third centuries of our era. This tiresome narrative is dragged on through no less than twenty volumes [...].'¹⁵ Lister continued to recount how Mr. W.F. Mayers, Her Majesty's Chinese Secretary of Legation then in China, had described the contents:

In every historical novel, it may be said without any exception, we recognize one unfailing and unvarying round of personages -- the wily and favoured counsellor; the plainspoken but unvalued minister; the sovereign, either founding a dynasty by martial virtues, or losing the throne by effeminacy and weakness; the priest, with flowing robes concealing a repertory of magic arts, and finally the truculent champion, a compound of Hercules and Bombastes, who brandishes sword, lance, and club, all of enormous size and weight, like playthings, occupies half the work with his challenges and encounters, and merits, in strength and bodily stature, the same invariable description.

To these ingredients add legendary marvels *ad libitum*, miraculous appearances of the gods in times of need, tricks, treacheries, murders, and banquets, and the romance is ready made to hand. Descriptive passages, with the exception of a few hyperbolic catalogues of glittering armour and impossible chargers, are as a rule ignored. Conversation, save in stilted speeches, is almost equally wanting. Just as on the Chinese stage the most trenchant contrasts of character alone are recognised, so in the romance, the bad are always bad, the good invariably supremely virtuous.¹⁶

"The same invariable description", as labelled by Mayers, is not only confined to the strength and bodily stature of the champion in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, it can also be observed in how the faces of heroes and heroines are described in the *San yan* tales as C.T. Hsia informs us that 'one could almost say that among the scores of beautiful girls and handsome young men to be seen in the *San-yen* tales there is hardly a face one can sharply visualize, because its description usually consists of a cluster of conventional metaphors.'¹⁷

¹⁵ Lister, p. 286.

¹⁶ Quoted in Lister, p. 286.

¹⁷ C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 13.

Lister also considered the masterpiece *Dream of the Red Chamber* in a negative manner.

He believes that:

The celebrated *Dream of the Red Chamber*, though set, by general and just verdict, at the head of Seric fiction, and though a work of art of which no nation need be ashamed, is yet at a great disadvantage on account of its bulk. Its tremendous length, no less than twenty volumes; the vast number of persons involved in the story; and the complicatedly mysterious character of the introductory chapters, make it a book which perhaps the most heroic efforts of enthusiastic scholars will never succeed in introducing to the world of western letters.¹⁸

Switching to a rather apologetic tone, Lister later tried to add some good remarks despite introducing the same negative comments towards the end:

At the same time, it is the very best reading for a student, and I am not sure that a tyro who has learned to read at all could do better than peruse it from beginning to end. In no other sort of Chinese reading is there anything like the thread of interest to enliven the way which may be found in this masterly book. But it is far too long to be read by anybody who has not a considerable stretch of unbroken time to devote to it, and there is no translation, nor, probably, will there ever be.¹⁹

With regard to Lister's complaint about the length of the novel and the amount of time to be devoted to it, Lin Yutang's observation on the tempo of Chinese novel and on how to appreciate a Chinese novel in his *My Country and my People* (1936) may offer itself as an appropriate advice:

On the whole, the tempo of the Chinese novel reflects very well the tempo of Chinese life. It is enormous, big and variegated and is never in a hurry. The novel is

¹⁸ Lister, p. 287.

¹⁹ Ibid. Since Lister's remarks in 1872, complete translations of the *Dream of the Red Chamber* have been brought out both in China and in the West. See *A Dream of Red Mansions*, trans. by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, 3 vols (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1978-1980; Sydney and Boston: Urwin Papers, 1986) and *The Story of the Stone*, trans. by David Hawkes (vols. 1-3) and John Minford (vols. 4-5), 5 vols (Harmondsworth, N.Y.: Penguin, 1973-1986; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, [1979]-1987). Sample adaptations include *Dream of the Red Chamber*, trans. by Chi-chen Wang (London: Routledge, 1929(?); Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1929; New York: Twayne, 1958; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1958) and *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, trans. by Florence and Isabel McHugh (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958).

avowedly created to kill time, and when there is plenty of time to kill and the reader in no hurry to catch a train, there is no reason why he must hurry to the end. A Chinese novel should be read slowly and with good tempo.²⁰

Yet Bishop concurs with Lister, Thwing, and Mayers that Western readers responded rather negatively to Chinese novels, putting it differently though:

Chinese colloquial fiction before the coming of Western influences certainly contains enough of both murder and adultery to give the average reader a sense of literary familiarity; but the thoughtful reader must be puzzled by an undefinable inadequacy, by a feeling of literary promise unfulfilled, to which even the student of Chinese stories and novels must confess.²¹

Bishop surmises that one of the possible reasons could rest in the literary traditions Western readers may bring to bear in the reading process, as he points out, 'Unconsciously conditioned as are we all to the premises and achievements of European fiction, we cannot fail to weigh this fiction of another culture in the same balance and find it vaguely wanting.'²² Perhaps Bishop need not feel apologetic as C.T. Hsia 夏志清, an American Chinese critic, seems to agree with him that even the Chinese themselves, those who have been exposed to Western fiction, may also find most of the works unrewarding. He makes this point clear in the opening sentence of *The Classic Chinese Novel* (1968):

A student of the traditional Chinese novel who has been at all exposed to Western fiction is sooner or later struck by the sharp contrast between the majority of unrewarding works composing that genre and a number of titles which, while sharing the literary conventions of these works, possess enough compensating excellences to appeal to the adult intelligence.²³

²⁰ Lin Yutang, p. 263.

²¹ Bishop, 'Some Limitations of Chinese Fiction', p. 237.

²² Ibid.

²³ C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 1.

Here, C.T. Hsia's remarks that 'the majority of unrewarding works composing that genre' are no different from the observation Cheng Chen-to 鄭振鐸, a Chinese critic, made regarding Chinese novels in his *Zhongguo wen xue yan jiu* 《中國文學研究》 [Studies on Chinese literature] (1957) that good novels were few while the majority were poorly written, bringing only disappointment.²⁴

Going back to Bishop, one can see that in spite of what he points out, Bishop still continued to measure works in "a wholly unrelated literature" arbitrarily using the fiction of the West as a standard. And on this ground, he defends himself thus:

In doing so, I must admit to taking arbitrarily the fiction of the West as a standard against which to measure works in a wholly unrelated literature, a questionable method if used to merely arrive at a value judgment, but a justifiable method if used to localize and appraise the different development in comparative genres of two distinct literatures.²⁵

Bishop has made one point clear here. It would be wrong to try to arrive at a value judgment of Chinese fiction using the fiction of the West as a standard. Also, it would be wrong to try to take in Chinese fiction in its totality applying only the literary criteria as applied to fiction in the West. It can be argued that reading Chinese fiction with a Western frame of mind could yield something quite different as different expectations are brought to bear on the text.²⁶ Perhaps, one may find it useful to re-consider the basic doctrines of contextualism: 'Literary interpretation is a circular process; that texts can be understood only when set against the conventional background from which they emerge; and that the same texts paradoxically contribute to the backgrounds that determine their meanings.'²⁷

²⁴ Cheng Chen-to 鄭振鐸, I, 333-34.

²⁵ Bishop, 'Some Limitations of Chinese Fiction', p. 237.

²⁶ Anthony Yu, in his 'History, Fiction and the Reading of Chinese Narrative', *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*, 10 (1988), 1-19 discusses how Chinese narratives are to be interpreted within a Chinese historical context as there has been a long tradition between history and fiction in China.

Yet, C.T. Hsia argues that the Chinese novel, with its special characteristics which can only be fully understood in historical terms, cannot be accorded full critical justice unless we are prepared to examine it against the Western novel, meaning that:

The modern reader of fiction is brought up on the practice and theory of Flaubert and James: he expects a consistent point of view, a unified impression of life as conceived and planned by a master intelligence, an individual style fully consonant with the author's emotional attitude towards his subject matter. He abhors explicit didacticism, authorial digression, episodic construction that reveals no cohesion of design, and clumsiness of every other kind that distracts his attention.²⁸

It can be argued that one may also find the yin-yang theory useful in tackling Chinese traditional novels. Like Robert Hegel who applies the polar opposites of the yin-yang theory, in his "*Sui T'ang yen-i* and the Aesthetics of the Seventeenth-Century Suchou Elite" (1977), to explain the difference between *zhanghui xiaoshuo* 章回小說 [the chapter-divided novel] and the western novel,²⁹ Andrew Plaks also uses the "complementary bipolarity" of the yin-yang theory and the pattern of "multiple periodicity" implicit in the five-elements schemes to account for an allegorical reading of the *Dream of the Red Chamber* and *The Monkey*.³⁰ Hegel finds that the moral stance portrayed in the Chinese traditional novel *Sui Tang yan yi* 《隋唐演義》 [Historical novel of the Sui and Tang dynasties], Zhu Renhuo's 褚人穫 (c. 1630 to c.1705) 'technique of alternating between

²⁷ Jay Schleusener, 'Convention and the Context of Reading', *Critical Inquiry*, 6.3-4 (1980), 669-80 (p. 669).

²⁸ C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 6.

²⁹ Robert Hegel, '*Sui T'ang yen-i* and the Aesthetics of the Seventeenth-Century Suchou Elite', in *Chinese Narrative: Critical and Theoretical Essays*, ed. by Andrew Plaks (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 124-59 (pp. 136-39, 146, 150). Further references to this part are given after quotations in the text.

³⁰ Andrew Plaks, 'Allegory in *Hsi-yu chi* and *Hung-lou meng*', in *Chinese Narrative: Critical and Theoretical Essays*, ed. by Andrew Plaks (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 163-202 (pp. 168-70, 175-78, 191-97). Further references to this part are given after quotations in the text.

polar opposites [...] produces a literary counterpart of the yin-yang duality in traditional Chinese cosmology' and in the placement of type characters Zhu's technique again is simply that of 'playing polar opposites off against each other in yin-yang fashion, of balancing extremes through manipulation of their sequential order' (p. 136). Zhu's Confucian Classical education, like that received by other Ming and Qing writers, had inculcated in him the concepts of equilibrium and harmonious balance between contrastive facets of the human experience. Thus, in human terms, as Hegel continues to observe:

The implications of structural arrangement of story elements, scenes, and character types in *Sui T'ang* are equally consistent with traditional Chinese views of life -- that life is diverse in types and levels of experience, that no one is all good or all bad but that all fall somewhere between these poles, and that the mean is inevitably found in human events as extremes counterbalance each other in never-ending cycles.

(pp. 136-37)

The fluctuation between poles -- this-worldly versus other-worldly as well as the fatalistic refrain voiced by Zhu in many chapters that joy brings sorrow; failure follows success; separation terminates happy unions; and calamity mars peace is the traditional concepts of the yin-yang effect -- the constant alternations of polar opposites as exemplified in Zhu's arrangement of story elements and character types throughout his work (pp. 138-39). Hegel regards Zhu's comments on the alternation of polar opposites through human life 'merely simplistic restatements of traditional wisdom' (p. 150).

Allegorical dimensions of traditional Chinese novels also differ from those found in Western novels. In his "Allegory in *Hsi-yu chi* and *Hung-lou meng*" (1977), Plaks points out that the major difficulty of dealing with the allegorical dimensions of works such as the *Dream of the Red Chamber* and *The Monkey* may be identified as the fact that:

The element of ontological disjunction at the heart of Western allegory simply does not apply in the Chinese literary system. More accurately, the characteristic Chinese solution to the problem of duality is of another sort altogether. This

solution, in brief, consists in the conception of a universe with neither beginning nor end, neither eschatological nor teleological purpose, within which all of the conceivable opposites of sensory and intellectual experience are *contained*, such that the poles of duality emerge as complementary within the intelligibility of the whole.

(pp. 167-68)

It can be argued that this point may also have a particular significance in allegorical reading in martial arts fiction as allegories, often found in this genre, may constitute yet another dimension in the multiple-level meanings of such works.³¹ Plaks also comments on the particular significance of multiple-level meanings of Chinese fiction, remarking:

Since the predilection of the Western allegorists for fictional narratives involving either goal-oriented movement or sequential revelation can be of little consequence in a universe in which all intelligibility resides in the here and now. The art of the Chinese allegorist, therefore, instead of signalling the truth or falsity, the figural density, or the hierarchical position of his specific narrative elements, consists more in setting them into larger patterns and cycles of recurrence that, taken as a whole, bear the meaning of the work.

(p. 168)

Plaks considers the allegorization of the patterns of flux that make up the existential universe of the *Dream of the Red Chamber* and *The Monkey* tends to draw heavily on the yin-yang and five-elements cosmological theories (p. 168). The five elements refer to metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. Plaks has reduced the logical relations implicit in

³¹ Ma Kwok-ming 馬國明 has attempted to deconstruct the idea of martial art as elaborated in the novels written by Jin Yong (real name Louis Cha), arguing that:

[T]he idea of martial art found there in fact functions as what Federic Jameson calls as an ideologeme.[...] He [Jin Yong] tries to address the problems confronting the traditional elites of China as a result of the incursions of Western imperialist powers. These problems form the underlying *subtext* for all the works of Louis Cha.

The crux of the problems is the preservation of the political order of traditional Chinese society which is dominated by the class of scholar/gentry. However, to survive the threat of imperialist incursions some forms of mobilization of the dominated class are required. The idea of martial art as elaborated in the novels of Louis Cha attempts precisely such mobilization. However, there is always the danger that the end result will be just the same for the ruling class. That is to say their demise as a ruling class.

the yin-yang and five-elements schemes of cosmological speculation to "complementary bipolarity" and "multiple periodicity". On the former, he further elaborates:

The Chinese tendency towards correlative thinking, whereby experience is apprehended in terms of paired concepts ranging from purely sensory qualities (hot and cold, light and dark, wet and dry) to abstractions such as true and false, life and death, or even being and non-being. In effect, each paired concept is treated as a continuum along which the qualities of experience are plotted in a process of ceaseless alternation, with the implication of presence within absence of the hypothetical poles. With this in mind, the terms 'yin' and 'yang' may be used as a shorthand reference for the entire range of dual possibilities, as long as it is understood that it is the formal relations of bipolarity, ceaseless alternation, and mutual implication of opposites, as well as the infinite overlapping of the sets of polar coordinates, that are at issue.

(pp. 169-70)

Plaks also stresses the importance of the pattern of "multiple periodicity" implicit in the five-elements correspondences in allegorical narrative. Referring to his own discussion on *The Monkey*, Plaks remarks:

The importance of such schemes as the five-elements cycle in allegorical narrative lies not in the assigning of a particular figure to a particular quarter, but rather in the formal relation that holds between the various terms employed. Since within this formal structure each individual term in a sense implies all the other terms, and moreover it is only within the entire cyclical conception that the specific terms have any meaning in the first place [...].

(p. 177)

Following C.T. Hsia's argument that the Chinese novel can only be accorded full critical justice when examined against the Western novel, one could perhaps also find it useful to examine the differences between vernacular fiction, to which martial arts fiction belongs, and the classical tale in Hanan's "The Early Chinese Short Story: A Critical Theory in Outline" (1967, repr. 1974).³² Briefly, the basic difference is the means of presentation.

Appeared in the abstract in Ma Kwok-ming, 'Hong Kong Martial Arts Novels: the Case of Louis Cha', (unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of Hong Kong, 1995).

The tale uses various means, but the most commonly used one is that of the self-effacing omniscient narrator, whereas the vernacular fiction is told by a writer who takes on the persona of the public story-teller addressing his listening public (p. 304). After pointing out the three modes of narrative in the vernacular fiction -- commentary, description, and presentation, Hanan observes that another obvious difference between vernacular fiction and the classical tale is that of language, as the use of the classical language is associated with implicit rhetoric and the vernacular with explicit rhetoric (p. 305). The difference between the effects of the two is that the vernacular tends to be referential and denotative, while the classical tends to be elegant and evocative; and the vernacular tends to be exhaustive, while the classical tends to be concentrated and elliptical (p. 306), meaning that exhaustiveness implies an interest in particularity. The vernacular aims at particularity, while the classical does not; and vernacular fiction pays particular attention to spatial and temporal setting, while the classical fiction does not (pp. 306-07).

Like Hanan³³ and Hawkes,³⁴ Bishop also discerns Chinese fiction as belonging to "a wholly unrelated literature" as he tried to identify factors which contributed to disappointment among Western readers upon reading Chinese fiction. In a similar vein, Dawson observes, 'It [Chinese literature] is also more self-contained than any of the great literatures, being very little touched by outside influences until the modern impact of the West.'³⁵ Because it is an "unrelated literature", Western readers may like to consider avoiding using Western literary criticism in assessing Chinese fiction if they do not want to

³² Details on the differences between vernacular fiction and the classical tale found in Hanan, 'The Early Chinese Short Story: A Critical Theory in Outline', in *Chinese Literary Genres*, ed. by Cyril Birch (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 299-338 (pp. 303-09). Further references to this part are given after references in the text.

³³ Hanan, 'The Development of Fiction and Drama', p. 115.

³⁴ David Hawkes, 'An Introductory Note', in *The Legacy of China*, ed. by Raymond Dawson (Oxford: Clarendon Press), pp. 80-90 (p. 84).

³⁵ Dawson, *The Chinese Experience* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978), p. 239.

be disappointed. Western readers may also like to consider that the notion of fiction, taken to mean *xiaoshuo* in China, may not also be the same as in the West.

The disappointment among Western readers upon reading Chinese fiction could also be attributed to other Western assumptions, whose unconscious presence in the reading of literature of another tradition prevent them from the full experience of that literature. Although twenty years or so have elapsed, some of the questions raised by Malone in his article "Cultural Assumptions and Western Literary Criticism" in 1975 could still be posed to contemporary Westerners who read Chinese fiction. Malone raises a number of questions on the application of Western literary criticism to literatures of the Eastern traditions, namely, when comparatists, in the West or the East, seek to examine and explicate literary texts, especially for comparative purposes, are they not too often basing their studies essentially upon the techniques and assumptions of Western literary critical analysis (pp. 57-58)? To what extent does the assumption of the preeminent importance of the individual distort the Westerners' reading of many or most Eastern literary texts (p. 62)? To what extent do the assumptions of Freudian, or even Jungian, psychology distort or possibly contribute to the Westerners' understanding of many or most Eastern literary texts (p. 62)? To what extent does the Westerners' almost compulsive desire to read a literary text as the expression of a particular human being distort or possibly contribute to their understanding of many or most Eastern literary texts (p. 63)? To what extent do Western attitudes towards religions or other comparable areas of human experience distort or possibly contribute to their understanding of many or most Eastern literary texts (p. 63)? To what extent is the mimetic assumption applicable to Eastern literature (p.65)?

Linked to that, another possible explanation could be that the Western reader has failed to examine the *xiaoshuo* genre within the context of its own literary characteristics. Eoyang examined this problem by probing deeper into the genre. In his article "A Taste for Apricots: Approaches to Chinese Fiction" (1977), Eoyang attempts to show that only by

examining the particular characteristics of the colloquial genre and by establishing its mode of existence could appropriate criteria for evaluation for the *xiaoshuo* genre be suggested. He points out that not only the notion of unity and the value of originality differ from the West, but also the audience for the colloquial fiction is defined differently. Eoyang explains that Chinese fiction is unitary, but not unified.³⁶ Each session in story-telling was a unit in itself. In Chinese colloquial fiction, each unit is called a "*hui* 回". One unit leads onto the next, forming an interlocking sequence, aggregating in series. Each unit is connected to the one that goes before and the one that comes after it. These then form larger cycles, which may result in a very loose, non-contingent plot. Colloquial fiction possesses a temporal unity of the oral narration. James J. Lu seems to concur with Eoyang on the "unit-ness" found in Chinese novels, which may also be regarded as a response to Bishop's comment on the lack of unity found in Chinese novels. It appears to James J. Lu that the Chinese novel, originating from oral traditions with the permeation of the narrative structure by verse, by lyric forms, is 'a large "narrative vessel" made by linking together smaller units.'³⁷ According to him, this notion of the novel applies to the Chinese novel, perhaps also to the Western novel. It would appear that his notion of the novel is far too vague to be of use in studying the novel as a genre in either the Chinese or Western literary systems. Missing from his notion is information on what precisely are meant by these units, what structural forms do they take, how is the term "small" being quantified, and how are these smaller units linked together to produce a large "narrative vessel" in question James J. Lu has not made this clear in his article. However, one fact that seems to emerge is that the episodic nature of Chinese novels has been hinted at. In his article "Towards a Critical Theory of Chinese Narrative" (1977), Andrew Plaks notes that the rise of extended vernacular prose fiction occurs nearly simultaneously, step by step, in both China and Europe and also that in both Europe and China the development may be traced to 'the linking of smaller forms to gradually build up a larger, more comprehensive, narrative

³⁶ Eoyang, 'A Taste for Apricots: Approaches to Chinese Fiction', p. 57.

³⁷ James J. Lu, p. 113.

vessel.'³⁸ However, he offers a different explanation for the lack of unity in Chinese novels as conceived by the Western reader. Starting with the premise that narration is that branch of literature which relates a sequence of human events, Plaks points out that different cultures have different ways of defining the "event" as an existential unit. He reminds us that 'literary civilization in the West has tended to conceive of human existence in terms of a continuous succession of events in time, with the resulting sense of the event as a quasi-substantive entity, the stuff of which existence is made.'³⁹ He then points out, however, that the Chinese tradition differs in this general reification of the event as a narrative unit, as:

The Chinese tradition has tended to place nearly equal emphasis on the overlapping of events, the interstitial spaces between events, in effect on non-events alongside of events in conceiving of human experience in time. In fact, the reader of the major Chinese narrative works soon becomes conscious of the fact that those clearly-defined events which do stand out in the texts are nearly always set into a thick matrix of non-events: static description, set speeches, discursive digressions, and a host of other non-narrative elements.⁴⁰

On the issue that it is often said that Chinese narrative tends to be "episodic", or that it lacks a certain degree of manifest artistic unity, Plaks reminds us that 'all narrative works must by very definition be episodic, to the extent that they deal with "episodes," or units of human experience, while by the same token every discrete narrative work must possess some degree of unity [...].'⁴¹ He continues to defend the lack of unity in Chinese novels by

³⁸ Plaks, 'Towards a Critical Theory of Chinese Narrative', p. 322.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 314-15.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 315. Plaks further applies the *yin-yang* formulations in traditional Chinese thought to viewing the event and non-event in Chinese novels. He points out that 'a characteristic tendency of traditional Chinese thought is to posit complementary categories of interrelation, the sort of patterns of mutual implication best known in the *yin-yang* or *yu-wu* formulations. When this logic of dual interaction is projected into such conceptual pairs as movement and stillness, event and non-event, or one might say *stasis* and *praxis*, then we arrive at a conceptualization of existence based upon two complementary dimensions: one in which the narrative segmentation of experience into some sort of units is relevant, and a second one of hypothetical order and balance that either diachronically precedes or synchronically underlies the first' (p. 316).

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 330.

claiming that 'given the logic of interrelated and overlapping categories that serves as the underpinning of traditional Chinese aesthetics, it is not surprising that the notion of artistic unity was never canonized as a central critical principle.'⁴² Plaks reiterates that it would seem wrong to look for this aesthetic sense of unified narrative shape in Chinese fiction as:

The idea that the aesthetic coherence of Chinese narrative is to be perceived in the interstitial, rather than the architectonic, dimension is not unrelated [...] to the conception of the event as the radical unit of human experience in different cultural spheres. Since in Chinese narrative, as in Chinese philosophy, existence is conceived of in terms of overlapping patterns of ceaseless alternation and cyclical recurrence, it follows that any attempt to mimetically reduce that experience to discrete models -- mythic or geometric plots such as lend themselves to the aesthetic sense of unified narrative shape -- would appear erroneous from the start.⁴³

Turning now to the question of originality, Eoyang demonstrates that among great Chinese and Japanese authors, the most original is also the most traditional. For within the Chinese literary traditions, 'the contribution of each story-teller, each poet, is not to start something totally new [...]; originality lies in the ability to renew and refresh a living tradition.'⁴⁴

Commenting on the peculiar nature of Chinese narrative, Karl S.Y. Kao also claims that original creation has never been a tradition of *xiaoshuo*. As he points out:

Because of a particular conception of creativity, a creativity based on the notion of technical and mental modelling, Chinese texts are characterized by a distinct kind of "intertextuality" It is a continuous activity in which the new text transmits a living tradition and maintains its vitality by transformation and renovation. In this activity, a new text finds its own identity only by assimilating and identifying with the model before transmitting it As opposed to an intertextuality that emphasizes differences, a Chinese "intertext" observes identification with a received pattern, while making a variation of it.⁴⁵

⁴² Ibid., p. 331.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 334-35.

⁴⁴ Eoyang, 'A Taste for Apricots: Approaches to Chinese Fiction', p. 58.

⁴⁵ Karl S.Y. Kao, 'Aspects of Derivation in Chinese Narrative', *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*, 7.1 (1985), 1-36 (p. 1).

Again, on the question of originality, Chiu Kuei-fen claims that the long vernacular *xiaoshuo* can be conceived as a mode of writing marked by its tendency for rewriting, with its emphasis on "synthesis" rather than original creation.⁴⁶ Chiu's claim was based on a study of the Chinese long vernacular *xiaoshuo* (*zhanghui xiaoshuo* 章回小說), the chapter-divided novel, which has often been called the Chinese novel and regarded as the Chinese literary equivalent of the novel in the West. However, they are not equivalent in the strictest sense. With regard to their respective modes of writing, both are prose narratives of considerable length and written in a language other than the prestigious classical literary language. The low status of Chinese novels may also be matched by the inferior status of the novel in the West.⁴⁷ Other than this first commonality, the Chinese long vernacular *xiaoshuo* and the novel brought out in the West seem to have very little in common. It could be argued that applying the ontological meaning of the term "novel" as interpreted in the West to Chinese novels -- *xiaoshuo* -- would, therefore, result in a sense of disappointment among the Western reader. In Chiu's "Writing and Rewriting in the Chinese Long Vernacular *Hsiao-shuo*" (1990), Chiu argues that the fundamental difference between the Western and the Chinese narrative modes is essentially a difference between the ontological meanings of the terms that designate these two modes of writing. While the term "novel" implies a narrative attitude emphasizing originality and newness,⁴⁸ the

⁴⁶ Chiu Kuei-fen, 'Writing and Rewriting in the Chinese Long Vernacular *Hsiao-shuo*', *Tamkang Review*, 21.1 (1990), 49-61 (p. 52).

⁴⁷ In his 'Discourse in the Novel', in *Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. by Michael Holquist; trans. by Carl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 259-422 (p. 269), Mikhail Bakhtin criticizes traditional European stylistics for excluding the novel from the realm of poetry and treating it as a form inferior to epic, lyric, and tragedy. 'The novel is a poetic discourse,' he writes, 'but one that does not fit within the frame provided by the concept of poetic discourse as it now exists ... The very concept -- in the course of its historical formulation from Aristotle to the present day -- has been oriented toward the specific "official" genres and connected with specific historical tendencies in verbal ideological life.' Quoted in James J. Lu, p. 121.

⁴⁸ One of the meanings suggested by the term "novel" is the notion of novelty and originality. Ian Watt points out that a crucial innovation of the novel is rejection of traditional plots. In emphasizing originality, Western novelists often reject old material for a new plot which highlights one's unique interpretation of the world. Another meaning of the term "novel" can be traced to the novel's early close association with journalism. Lennard J. Davis points out that the word *novel* 'seems to have been used interchangeably with the word *news* -- and both were applied freely to writings that were about true or

term *xiaoshuo* suggests nothing of the sort. Chiu reminds us that what is involved in the writing of a *xiaoshuo* 'is not so much the act of original invention as that of reworking and rewriting the extant material' and 'that such a view of *hsiao-shuo* continued to serve as the underpinning of the *hsiao-shuo* writing in pre-modern China is an obvious but too often neglected fact.'⁴⁹ Since Chinese novelists' conception of originality in their works differs greatly from that of Western novelists, the Western reader's disappointment upon reading Chinese novels would come as no surprise. The Western reader would be disappointed because whatever originality he expects to find in Chinese novels may turn out to be circulation of extant material or rewriting of other people's discourses, as Chiu suggests, and this may explain the structural unevenness of the novel. Instead of finding a new plot as would be likely in a novel brought out in the West, the Western reader would end up finding repetitions of the same plot in different novels, or worst still, within the same novel, as pointed out earlier by Lister, Thwing, and Bishop.

Eoyang points out that Western novels are written for a reading public -- a "virtual audience", in Susanne Langer's terms -- 'one that is real not in actual terms, but in the imaginative act of reading.'⁵⁰ Unlike Western novels, Chinese novels evolved from narratives intended for a listening public. Eoyang reminds us that since 'there is the requirement of retaining the disparate, immediately pressing audience and, perhaps most difficult, of accommodating constantly shifting listeners' that 'the functional criterion of oral storytelling is not an overall unity, but an elasticity of structure that accommodates the contingencies of the moment.'⁵¹ Thus, a Western writer can stay aloof, keeping a distance from his audience whereas a Chinese story-teller has to establish rapport with his audience,

fictional events, quotidian or supernatural occurrences, and incidents that may have been recent or several decades old.' Quoted in Chiu, p. 50.

⁴⁹ Chiu, p. 51.

⁵⁰ Eoyang, 'A Taste of Apricots: Approaches to Chinese Fiction', pp. 58-59.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 61.

interact with them, and catering for their shifting interests. Chinese novels have retained this structure of the oral traditions of story-tellers.

In his article "Limitations of Chinese Fiction" (1956), Bishop seems to suggest that the disappointment among Western readers upon reading Chinese fiction could point to two limitations found in traditional colloquial fiction: limitation of narrative convention and limitation of purpose. He explains how primitive conventions, which stemmed from an earlier period when colloquial fiction was part of an oral tradition of literature, imposed a limitation on Chinese fiction as 'primitive conventions were retained long after the narratives had begun to change in scope and purpose, and that new themes were forced into old molds to the detriment of the final product.'⁵² The characteristic features of how marketplace story-tellers applied sensationalism, either supernatural, murderous or sexual, to materials drawn from historical records, Buddhist and Taoist hagiographies, tales in the literary language, and even celebrated local scandals were carried over, in time, to the written versions intended to be read. They persisted in written works to such a degree that 'these once functional literary devices have been retained as nonessential literary clichés.'⁵³

Bishop claims that a most notable influence of the early origins of *xiaoshuo* on novels is 'the heterogeneous and episodic quality of plot' which the Western reader found most disturbing.⁵⁴ His assumption about the Western reader's negative response to Chinese novels was based on the belief that 'not since the Arthurian romances and Malory have readers been entertained with such a plethora of characters and incidents within the

⁵² Bishop, 'Limitations of Chinese Fiction', p. 238.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 239.

⁵⁴ Bishop points out how in *The Water Margin* one is expected to follow a story involving 108 heroes, over a third of whom play a major role in the novel, and in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* one must cope with the shifting fortunes and myriad battles and incidents of rulers and military leaders of three warring states. Ibid. p. 240.

confines of a single literary work.⁵⁵ Not only are the novels studded with a panoply of characters, they possess a style that is unique as Bishop continues to observe:

These accretive novels, then, retain the meticulous narrative style of their original materials, a style which is preoccupied with surface reality, presenting to the reader a clear visual picture of outward appearance and movement and a verbatim account of dialogue. In addition, the structure of their plots is marked by episodic variety, bound by a tenuous unity of historical and pseudo-historical theme.⁵⁶

Compared to the Western novel, not only does the Chinese novel show a lack of form, it also reveals a different conception of fiction. In Ming and Qing China, author and reader alike were more interested in the fact in fiction than in fiction as such. This tradition can be traced to the professional story-tellers who always honoured the convention of treating fiction as fact and to the influence of the Confucian classics which had conditioned the Chinese to the habit of allegoric reading.⁵⁷ C.T. Hsia argues that the episodic nature of the Chinese novel is rooted in the novelist's fascination with fact, whereby he 'seldom feels the challenge to concentrate on one major episode until all its potential meanings have become dramatized. Instead, he crowds his pages with scores of characters, some only names, and piles of incident upon incident, climax upon climax.'⁵⁸ The result of which, to the Western reader, is an absence of personality in the style of such fiction. The novels seem to be preoccupied with "story" rather than with an individual mode of telling the story. They appear to be 'striving to reproduce the social macrocosm rather than to explore the human microcosm', as Bishop puts it.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ C.T. Hsia, in his *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 16, points out that every single *San yan* tale places its main characters in a historical context which vouches for its historicity and that dynastic novels were written and read as popular history. And novels such as the *Golden Lotus* and the *Dream of the Red Chamber* were designed to veil the allegory of high-ranking personages in the imperial court.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 16-17.

⁵⁹ Bishop, 'Limitations of Chinese Fiction', p. 241.

Perry E. Link, however, discerns a narrower gap between fiction produced in modern China and in the West. In *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies. Popular Fiction in Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Cities* (1981), he reminds us that:

Regardless of whether inspirations were native or foreign, fundamental themes were much the same. As in Europe, America, and Japan, the major types of modern popular fiction in China were: (1) love stories, (2) righteous-hero adventures, (3) scandal, or "muckraking" stories, and (4) detective stories.⁶⁰

Link considers Zhang Henshui's 張恨水 masterpiece *Ti xiao yin yuan* 《啼笑因緣》 [Fate in tears and laughter] unique in modern popular Chinese fiction for 'its weaving together of three major types in that tradition -- the love story, knight-errant story, and "social" novel.'⁶¹ He is careful, though, to point out that modern Chinese fiction has strong roots in the Chinese vernacular tradition:

Each of these themes, however altered by modern circumstances, had strong roots in the Chinese vernacular tradition, i.e. (1) The love-story tradition of *ts'ai-tzu chia-jen* or "talent-meets-beauty" stories, plus, to a certain extent, *Dream of the Red Chamber*; (2) *The Water Margin*, *Tale of Heroic Young Lovers* (*Erh-nü ying-hsiung chuan*) and the whole "knight-errant" tradition; (3) *Forest of Scholars* and the late-Ch'ing "blame" novels; and (4) Ch'ing "public case" (*kung-an*) stories such as *The Cases of Judge Peng* (*P'eng kung-an*).⁶²

Perhaps, it would be helpful to consider the views of a Chinese critic at this juncture and examine what he perceived to be the major differences between traditional Chinese fiction and modern Chinese fiction as influenced by novels in the West. Writing on the origins and development of Chinese fiction in 1934, Hu Huaichen 胡懷琛 observed that modern Chinese novels differed from traditional novels in eight ways: firstly, the novel was written in modern Chinese, leaving no traces of the literary language which had been used since ancient times; secondly, it was definitely a written literature, not an oral one, having rid

⁶⁰ Link, *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, p. 9.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 37.

⁶² Ibid., p. 9

itself of all oral traditions; thirdly, it described the everyday life of ordinary people, rather than the unusual life style of the elite; fourthly, its meanings had been removed from those of mythological tales and parables; fifthly, its structure could afford to be simple and the story need not be strange and elaborate; sixthly, its structure had to be closely-knit, and under no circumstances could it be loosely organized; seventhly, focus had to be placed on describing in a realistic manner the life of ordinary people as well as the customs of people living in other places; and finally, attention had to be paid to realistic character portrayal, how the characters blended into the story.⁶³ It could, at least, be deduced from these differences that Hu seemed also to state in a manner, though not too explicitly, that the norms of traditional Chinese fiction, as opposed to modern Chinese fiction influenced by the West at the turn of the century, were that literary language, along with the vernacular, was used in penning traditional fiction; oral traditions of storytellers were an integral part of traditional *xiaoshuo*; traditional novels could dwell on the supernatural; they should tell a good story with a lot of twists and turns, albeit suspense; and the novel would appear very loosely organized. Hu's observation of the norms of traditional Chinese novels pointed also to the kind of expectations readers would bring to bear. A Western reader's disappointment could perhaps be attributed to different expectations, as would a Chinese have upon reading modern Chinese fiction influenced by the West for the first time. Hu, the Chinese critic, also found modern Chinese fiction rather limited in scope, with its boundaries strictly defined, compared to Chinese traditional fiction. Penning modern Chinese fiction could be quite a task as one just could not simply slip in what seemed familiar. Also, taking up a different genre may take some time to get used to, as it may require conscious efforts on the part of the reader to cultivate a taste for it, should he or she find it agreeable. Hu recalls how a collection of European short stories Zhou Zuoren 周作人 translated into literary Chinese at the turn of the century was at first considered a disaster.⁶⁴ There was nothing wrong with the stories themselves, rather they were beyond

⁶³ Hu Huaichen 胡懷琛, pp. 115-16, summary mine.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 46.

readers at the time. Readers disliked these translated short stories as they found both the beginning and ending of such stories missing; they disliked such stories as they were telling only very simple tales; and they also disliked the stiff and unadorned literary language used in the translation. As a result, Zhou's collection was hardly known at the time. It was only a decade later when more European short stories and novels had been translated into Chinese that people began to pay more serious attention to modern Chinese fiction. The term *xiaoshuo*, by then, had come to include not only traditional classical novels and vernacular novels, heavily indebted to oral traditions of story-telling, but also the so-called shorter "short stories" and longer "novels" influenced by the West, totally devoid of oral traditions of the past. Despite their different modes of writing and literary traditions, they were all classified as *xiaoshuo*. Given the complexity of the meaning of *xiaoshuo* as applied to Chinese literature, it should come as no surprise that those not trained in the field, or not informed enough, would find it a hard task as to decide on what criteria to use in assessing the *xiaoshuo* genre in Chinese literature as the *xiaoshuo* in each period of development would call for a different set of literary criteria if a full appreciation, albeit fair evaluation, were to be obtained, as Chinese literary history shows a steady increase in the size of fictional forms: from Han and Six Dynasties tidbits, to the Tang *Chuanqi* tales, to the vernacular short story, to oral story cycles, to full-length narratives. Although the Chinese narrative tradition does not follow the epic-romance-novel progression as in the West, a certain generic link with the epic model in the Western context can still be found, for in the great Chinese novels it is 'the sweeping perspective of historiography that this aesthetic quality brings to mind.'⁶⁵ Sheldon Lu would appear to concur with this view in his *From Historicity to Fictionality: The Chinese Poetics of Narrative* (1994) when he points out the difference in the relationship between history and fiction in both the West and China, remarking:

Today in the West, it is customary to speak of historical narrative and fictional narrative as two subdivisions of narrative. As we will see, the relationship between

⁶⁵ Plaks, 'Towards a Critical Theory of Chinese Narrative', p. 322.

historiography and fiction is extremely meaningful and even fundamental in the study of the Chinese 'narrative' tradition.⁶⁶

Plaks also reminds us:

Any theoretical inquiry into the nature of Chinese narrative must take its starting point in the acknowledgement of the immense importance of historiography and, in a certain sense, 'historicism' in the total aggregate of the culture. In fact, the question of how to define the narrative category in Chinese literature eventually boils down to whether or not there did exist within the traditional civilization a sense of the inherent commensurability of its two major forms: historiography and fiction.⁶⁷

According to Bishop, another characteristic of Chinese fiction which the Western reader finds disturbing is the mixing of naturalism and supernaturalism within the same narrative.⁶⁸

Another literary assumption that underlies the reading of Chinese fiction is that traditionally, even up until the beginning of this century, 'literature is meant to convey principles' (*wen yi zai dao* 文以載道). Thus, it is not uncommon that a Western reader would find both the principle of ultimate motivation and the moral purpose in Chinese fiction equally ambiguous.⁶⁹ The insertion of homilies or moral teachings into narrative material frankly pornographic or immoral in nature would seem to destroy the integrity expected of good fiction in the West, though this, in fact, was a means by which such works could circumvent Confucian officialdom, as writers emphasized fiction as moral

⁶⁶ Sheldon Lu, p. 28. Particularly useful are Chapters 1 and 2. Chapter 1 "Rectifying the Terms, I: "Narrative," "History," and "Fiction" in the West gives a review on some representative, prevailing, and historically important Western approaches to "narrative", "history", and "fiction", pp. 13-36. Chapter 2 "Rectifying the Terms, II: "Narrative," "History," and "Fiction" in China gives a review on some representative, prevailing, and historically important Chinese approaches to "narrative", "history", and "fiction", pp. 37-52.

⁶⁷ Plaks, 'Towards a Critical Theory of Chinese Narrative', pp. 311-12.

⁶⁸ Bishop, 'Limitations of Chinese Fiction', p. 241.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 243.

instruction and took every opportunity 'to include homilies on the Confucian virtues and thus provide a specious pedagogic function which is wholly foreign to such literature.'⁷⁰ Eoyang also reminds us that the "didactic strain" in Chinese fiction was 'not without redeeming social values' as 'far from being morally frivolous, the popularizations of history were effective means of teaching the untaught, of instructing the illiterate,'⁷¹ for one's moral sensibility to censure evil and to exalt virtue could be moulded in the formative period of childhood from exposure to moral lessons contained in Chinese narrative fiction.

Although both Chinese and Western fictions attempt to portray characters in a realistic manner, they differ in terms of degree. As Bishop reminds us:

Both exploit dialogue as a means of differentiating character and caste. The novel of the West, however, explores more thoroughly the minds of characters, and long familiarity with this realm has made possible whole novels which are confined to the individual mind alone, such as those of Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. But to the Chinese novelist, the mental life of his fictional characters is an area to be entered only briefly when necessary and then with timidity.⁷²

What Bishop referred to above no longer holds true for writers have already borrowed and experimented with such writing techniques from the West, especially the stream-of-consciousness in contemporary Chinese fiction. Early examples are found in Ba Xianyong's 白先勇 fiction and Liu Yichang's 劉以鬯 *Jiutu* 《酒徒》 [The drunkard] (Hong Kong, 1963) in which the writer protagonist carries out a sustained critique of the status of literature in Hong Kong exploring both internal monologue and stream-of-consciousness techniques.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Eoyang, 'A Taste for Apricots: Approaches to Chinese Fiction', p. 54.

⁷² Bishop, 'Limitatons of Chinese Fiction', p. 243.

Another feature of Chinese fiction that the Western reader may find unpalatable is the non-committal "*dao* 道" or "*yue* 曰" (meaning "said") in their novels. Bishop associates this with the quality of monotone found in dialogues as:

The Chinese narrator gives no hint of the emotion implicit in each speech beyond that which the speech itself suggests. As a result, even the racy, supple and vital dialogue, which is one of the strong points of colloquial fiction, sometimes has the quality of monotone to the reader conditioned to the subtle overtones suggested by the stage directions in Western fiction.⁷³

This literary device in delivering dialogues is still retained in modern Chinese fiction although a more modern word "*shuo* 說" (meaning "said") has been used instead. What Bishop pointed out here may seem like a fact to be reckoned with, but he may have forgotten to remind his readers that traditional Chinese fiction evolved originally from story-tellers' prompt-books in the Song Dynasty, thus may still reflect the narrative mode of story-telling. Eoyang also reminds us that in the West,

The printed piece of fiction does not depend on actual sounds being pronounced to achieve their effect: the sounds are on the page. If this seems commonplace, it is because readers in phonetic languages tend to associate meaning with identifiable sound, and the graphs that denote these sounds also denote the visible word.⁷⁴

In Chinese, however, one does not visualize the sounds on the page. To Bishop's accusation, Eoyang seems to offer a ready retort, 'For if the colloquial fiction fails to please the modern reader, the fault lies in the reader's failure to recreate imaginatively the actual experience of the original audience.'⁷⁵ It would appear that the reader's role is being emphasized here and it is the reader's responsibility to bring himself to the text.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 244.

⁷⁴ Eoyang, 'A Taste for Apricots: Approaches to Chinese Fiction', p. 59.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

Bishop's observation that 'the Chinese narrator gives no hint of the emotion implicit in each speech' may not seem totally valid against C.T. Hsia's opinion that colloquial language has been successfully deployed in the *Dream of the Red Chamber*. Hsia argues that:

Until the eighteenth century, then, the novelists made strong use of the vernacular only in the speeches of their characters. While a literary quality still persists in the speech of the educated, tradition had early assigned to certain heroes of coarse vitality and to the lower classes in general the use of the vernacular. This tradition, which first blossomed in *The Water Margin*, culminated in *Dream of the Red Chamber*, where nearly all the major characters reveal themselves through their speech, each with an individual idiom and way of talking. That novel also marks the unprecedented success with which the colloquial language registers the psychological conditions of characters.⁷⁶

Also, Bishop's observation that 'the racy, supple and vital dialogue [...] sometimes has the quality of monotone' would appear weak against how C.T. Hsia describes the speech of Pan Jinlian 潘金蓮, the lecherous woman in the *Golden Lotus*. As Hsia describes it:

P'an Chin-lien [Pan Jinlian], the principal heroine of *Chin P'ing Mei* [*The Golden Lotus*], speaks a most racy language studded with slang and billingsgate; but when the author describes her mental conditions, he invariably uses the language of the popular song to dress her in the borrowed elegance of studied languor, anger, or frustration.⁷⁷

Despite the few counter-arguments presented above, it can be argued that the observations made by Western readers and critics so far in this study on narration, dialogue, and description in the *xiaoshuo* genre in Chinese literature, ranging from the "shorter" colloquial stories of the *San yan* collections which stem directly from the oral tradition to the "longer" colloquial novels which are additionally tied to the tradition of historiography seem to be supported by C.T. Hsia who claims that 'by and large, the Ming and Ch'ing novelists pay little attention to mood and atmosphere so that narration, dialogue, and

⁷⁶ C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 13.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

description are rarely integrated into an organic whole.'⁷⁸ And on this point, he elaborates further:

To introduce a new scene, the novelist may describe the place quite elaborately, but in the subsequent narration few of the descriptive details will again be hinted at, so that the characters in that scene go about their business virtually detached from their setting. These characters may have a conversation, but as the author reports their speeches, again he provides only the most rudimentary stage directions, which means in effect that we can not see the characters while they talk. However frequently interspersed with description and dialogue, a narrative that is almost expository in character speaks for the novelist's lack of ambition to define a scene and unfold all its potential drama.⁷⁹

Despite the many differences in the expectations of fictional works between Chinese readers and Western readers, there still exist certain characteristics common to the *xiaoshuo* and early realistic fiction in Europe. Finally, Bishop admits that by understanding and accepting the unfamiliar conventions of Chinese fiction, a Western reader 'will find in its works much profit, diversion and an admirable craftsmanship in the art of storytelling.'⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 14.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Bishop, 'Some Limitations of Chinese Fiction', p. 247.

Chapter Three

Martial Arts Fiction in Literature, in Libraries and in a Nutshell

Martial Arts Fiction in Literature

Martial arts fiction is one of the translated terms used to denote a popular literary genre known to contemporary Chinese readers as *wuxia xiaoshuo* 武俠小說. Ni Kuang 倪匡, prolific Hong Kong writer now based in San Francisco, has attempted to explain that the genre consists of three components which make up its Chinese label, i.e. *wu* 武 (martial prowess) + *xia* 俠 (knight-errantry) + *xiaoshuo* 小說 (fiction).¹ As its Chinese term implies, it belongs to the fiction tradition in the Chinese literary system, with its subject matter evolving around martial prowess and knight-errantry. Iain Sinclair and Christopher Fu, based in Australia, have also attempted to explain what martial arts fiction is in their "The WWW Guide to Louis Cha (Jin Yong)" (c.1996) on the Internet by tracing its meaning to its ontological roots in the Chinese term *wuxia xiaoshuo*:

The word *wuxia* comprises two characters. The first is *wu* -- martial, military, chivalry. The second is *xia* -- knight-errant, wanderer, swordsman, paladin, warrior. *Xiaoshuo* means novels, literature, or stories, so *wuxia xiaoshuo* is the tradition of martial arts-themed romantic fiction.²

They point out that Jin Yong's fiction is a firm example of the *wuxia* genre. John Minford, sinologist and translator, has tried to convey the general fascination for this genre among Chinese since the Tang Dynasty by drawing an analogy in Western terms:

Try to imagine the fascination that *might* be exercised among English readers by a (hitherto non-existent) genre combining the content of good old-fashioned cloak-and-dagger historical romance (well told -- a rattling good yarn, preferably set in seventeenth-century France, or during the Jacobite uprising, or in the British Navy during the Napoleonic Wars, or the Late British Empire), with a certain amount of

¹ Ni Kuang 倪匡, *Wo kan Jin Yong xiao shuo* 《我看金庸小說》 [Reading Yin Jong's martial arts novels] (Taipei: Yuanjing chuban gongsi, 1980), pp. 6-7.

² Iain Sinclair and Christopher Fu, compiled, "The WWW Guide to Louis Cha (Jin Yong)", Online, Internet: "<http://www.citri.edu.au:8888/JY/jy-www.html>", 2 May, 1996.

material from the Occult (the Knights Templar, the Cathar Treasure, Nostradamus, etc), and a lot of detailed (indeed fanciful) description of some national sport that combined the excitement of duelling and boxing with the underlying 'national philosophy' of cricket.³

It can be argued that this simplification intended by Minford may turn out to be a disservice, for what makes a martial arts fiction out of *wuxia xiaoshuo* is its "Chinese-ness", stemming from the "Chinese-ness" of the writers as well as from the "Chinese-ness" which readers bring to bear. Not to be dismissed is that a full appreciation could only be derived by situating the genre in a Chinese literary and cultural context.

Although the translation of traditional Chinese stories of knights-errant into European languages has been under way for quite some time,⁴ the translation of martial arts novels into English or other languages in the West has only been undertaken in recent years. Robin Wu would appear to be one of the first who attempted to translate a martial arts novel into English. His much condensed, albeit distorted and truncated, translation of contemporary Hong Kong martial arts novelist⁵ Jin Yong's 金庸 (born

³ John Minford, introduction, *The Deer and the Cauldron -- the Adventures of a Chinese Trickster: Two Chapters from a Novel* by Jin Yong, reprinted from *East Asian History* 5 (Canberra: Institute of Advanced Studies), pp. 1-14 (pp. 2-3).

⁴ Wang Chi-chen's *Traditional Chinese Tales* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944) contains two tales of swordsmen and swordswoman possessing magic powers, 'The K'unlun Slave' (pp. 93-97) and 'Yinniang the Swordswoman' (pp. 98-103), which first appeared in the Tang *zhuanqi* 傳奇 tales. Karl S.Y. Kao's *Classical Chinese Tales of the Supernatural and the Fantastic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985) contains one chivalric tale 'Li Chi, the Serpent Slayer' in *Sou shen ji* 《搜神記》 [Searching for the spirits] (pp. 105-06) and three chivalric tales of the Tang period, namely, 'The K'unlun Slave' (pp. 351-56), 'Nieh Yin-niang' (pp. 357-62), and 'Hung-hsien' (pp. 363-70). One other version of 'The Kun Lun Slave', translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, is found in William McNaughton, ed. *Chinese Literature: An Anthology From the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (Vermont and Tokyo: Tuttle, 1974), pp. 289-94. Tales of chivalry are found scattered all over James J.Y. Liu's Chapter three 'From Fact to Fiction', in his *The Chinese Knight-errant* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1967), pp. 81-137. Six traditional Chinese stories of knights-errant are found under the section on knight-errant in Ma Yau-woon and Joseph S.M. Lau, eds., *Traditional Chinese Stories: Themes and Variations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), pp. 41-82. A swordsman story, that of Cheng Yaojin 程咬金 in *Sui shi yi wen* 《隋史遺文》 [Forgotten tales of the Sui], is found in Robert Hegel, *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China* (New York: Columbia University, 1981), pp. 133-37. For tales on knights-errant in the *san yan* 三言 collection which have been translated into European languages since the early nineteenth-century, see translation list in John Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China*, pp. 128-35.

⁵ Wong Wai-leung's four categories of "authentic" Hong Kong writers as defined in his *Hong Kong Literature in the Context of Modern Chinese Literature* (Hong Kong: Centre for Hong Kong Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1987), p. 12 is being adopted here. The four types of "authentic"

1924) *Xue shan fei hu* 《雪山飛狐》 into *Flying Fox of the Snowy Mountain*, which was serialized in four parts in *Bridge* magazine,⁶ a now defunct bimonthly brought out in New York in the early 1970's, could hardly be considered a serious effort at translation. Besides Robin Wu's serialized translation, only three complete translations plus an incomplete one, consisting of the first two chapters of a novel which later expanded to include the first ten, appear to have been published so far. The three complete translations are Christine Corniot's translation of prolific Taiwan writer Gu Long's 古龍 (1938-1985) *Huan le ying xiong* 《歡樂英雄》 into *Les Quatre Brigands du Huabei* (1990), brought out in Paris; Robert Chard's translation of Huanzhulouzhuzhu's 還珠樓主 (1902-1961) *Liu hu xia yin* 《柳湖俠隱》 into *Blades from the Willows* (1991), brought out in London; and Olivia Mok's full translation of Jin Yong's *Xue shan fei hu* 《雪山飛狐》 into *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* (1993), brought out in Hong Kong. The incomplete one is John Minford's translation of Jin Yong's *Lu ding ji* 《鹿鼎記》 into *The Deer and the Cauldron -- the Adventures of a Chinese Trickster: Two Chapters from a Novel* (1994), brought out in Canberra, which later expanded to include the first ten chapters in his *The Deer and the Cauldron: A Martial Arts Novel, The First Book* (1997), brought out in New York. A recent navigation on the Internet shows that a complete translation of Jin Yong's shortest martial arts story 'Yue nu jian 越女劍' [Sword of the Yue maiden] has been rendered into English and can be viewed on the

Hong Kong writers according to Wong (p. 12) are: '(1) Those born, educated and having their literary career in Hong Kong; (2) Those educated and having their literary career in Hong Kong; (3) Those having started and continuing their literary career in Hong Kong; and (4) Those continuing their literary activities in Hong Kong as a major part of their entire career.' As Jin Yong received his education in China, but moved to Hong Kong in 1948 and built up his career there, he, therefore belongs to those who have started and continued their literary career in Hong Kong. I have also referred elsewhere to Jin Yong as a Chinese writer now based in Hong Kong.

⁶ Robin Wu's translation of Jin Yong's 金庸 *Xue shan fei hu* 《雪山飛狐》 into *Flying Fox of the Snowy Mountain* was serialized in four parts in *Bridge* magazine, copyrighted by the Basement Workshop, Inc., New York, Part I, 1.4 (March/April 1972), 42-49; Part II, 1.5 (May/June 1972), 36-44; Part III, 1.6 (July/August 1972), 17, 29, 40, 42, 45-50; and Part IV, 2.1 (Sept/Oct 1972), 40-45.

screen. The same navigation shows that Password in the United Kingdom has announced the publication details of another two martial arts novels.⁷

Scholars in the West have attempted different renditions for the literary term *wuxia xiaoshuo*, particularly when the genre was first being introduced, as shown in the extracts that follow. It would appear that the contextual information accompanying each extract may also provide additional clues for explaining the literary genre in question. After attempting to classify Chinese novels into eight types, according to contents, in his work *My Country and my People* (1936, rpt. 1938), Lin Yutang 林語堂 (1895-1976) goes on to explain: 'I have grouped these [eight types of novels according to contents] more or less in the order of their popular influence. A catalogue of common novels in "circulating libraries" on the street would show that novels of adventure, in Chinese called "novels of chivalry," easily top the list.'⁸ Lin rendered

⁷ An Internet search was made browsing Netscape on 1 August, 1996. It showed that Jin Yong's shortest martial arts story '*Yue nu jian* 越女劍', attached to his *Xia ke xing* 《俠客行》 [Ode to the gallantry], has been rendered into English as 'Sword of the Yueh Maiden' by an anonymous translator. The complete English version is retrievable on "<http://www.2.best.com/~zhuge/yueh.html>" as well as from several other homepages on Jin Yong. The same search also showed that Password, distributor of Wellsweep which published Robert Chard's earlier translation of Huanzhulouzhu's 還珠樓主 *Liu hu xia yin* 《柳湖俠隱》 into *Blades from the Willows* (1991), on "<http://www.poptel.org.uk/password/stoknew.html>", has announced that Robert Chard's translation sequel of Huanzhulouzhu's 還珠樓主 *Liu hu xia yin* II 《柳湖俠隱 II》 into *Seeds of Evil: Blades from the Willows II* (ISBN 0948454202) and Graham Earnshaw's translation of Jin Yong's 金庸 *Shu jian en chou lu* 《書劍恩仇錄》 into *The Book and the Sword* (ISBN 0948454229) are to be published by Wellsweep in late 1995 or early 1996. Hard copies of the afore-mentioned information have been made for purposes of record. But a later search made browsing Wellsweep's homepage on May 30, 1997 showed that Chard's translation *Seeds of Evil: Blades from the Willows II* was to come out in April/May 1997 while his *Blades from the Willows* (1991) was also marketed as a three-sequel CD-ROM, the first disc of this title was launched recently. Further information regarding Earnshaw's supposedly forthcoming translation of Jin Yong's *The Book and the Sword* seemed to be missing on Wellsweep's homepage. However, a complete translation of Jin Yong's *The Book and the Sword* was found to be retrievable from Earnshaw's homepage on Internet address: "<http://village.ios.com/~earnshaw/B&S.html>". Earnshaw even encouraged people to download and circulate his translation. An Internet search made on August 28, 1997 showed that Chard's *Seeds of Evil: Blades from the Willows II* was to come in summer, 1997, as announced by Wellsweep the publisher. However, information on his electronic publication was found missing on this latest Internet search. Wellsweep's announcement of Earnshaw's *The Book and the Sword*, by Louis Cha [Jin Yong] also re-surfaced in this August, 1997 Online Internet search.

⁸ Lin Yutang, p. 261.

wuxia xiaoshuo into "novels of chivalry". Despite its being the most popular as pointed out by Lin, this genre failed to be included in his list of "recognized" novels.

James J.Y. Liu 劉若愚 introduces the literary genre which is fiction featuring knights-errant as the "military-chivalric" kind of fiction or "chivalric fiction" in his *The Chinese Knight-errant* (1967), which, according to him, is more often concerned with 'physical culture and methods of fencing and boxing than with chivalry'.⁹ It would appear that Liu has made an apt comment not only on traditional martial arts fiction produced in China before the Communist take-over in 1949 which he only included in his *The Chinese Knight-errant*, but also on contemporary martial arts fiction produced in places outside China, like Hong Kong and Taiwan, since 1949, which has crowned this genre with another unprecedented peak of popularity. Liu's so-called "military-chivalric" kind of fiction or "chivalric fiction" indeed seems to evolve more on different schools of swordplay and pugilism than on chivalry or knight-errantry as suggested by its Chinese label.

Commenting on the swordsman as a traditional type of hero in Chinese classic novels, C.T. Hsia 夏志清 observes that 'in Hong Kong and Taiwan, new novels and stories about swordsmen (*wu-hsia hsiao-shuo*) are being continually published and avidly read.'¹⁰ Hsia establishes the places of origin of contemporary "novels and stories about swordsmen", a newly evolved genre from a traditional genre, as Hong Kong and Taiwan, not Mainland China as she was then a Communist country closed to the world, which abhorred writing flourishing in capitalist Hong Kong and Taiwan. It would appear to Hsia that the main characteristics of this genre are swordsmen, rather than acts of knight-errantry. It can be argued that Hsia seems to be concurring with Liu that

⁹ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 134. The term "military-chivalric" appears on p. 134 while the term "chivalric fiction" appears on p. 137.

¹⁰ C.T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*, p. 30.

this genre is more often concerned with 'physical culture and methods of fencing and boxing than with chivalry'. Unlike Liu, whose discussion of martial works stopped before the postwar period, Hsia's "new novels and stories about swordsmen" stretch beyond the postwar period, which most *aficionados* consider to be the golden age of martial arts fiction, with Jin Yong hailed as the reigning writer of the genre.¹¹

Ma Yau-woon 馬幼垣 claims in his *The Pao-Kung Tradition in Chinese Popular Literature* (1971) that the sequences of the *San xia wu yi* 《三俠五義》 [Three heroes and five gallants] and works in the *Peng gong an* 《彭公案》 [Public cases of Lord Peng] and *Shi gong an* 《施公案》 [Public cases of Lord Shi] series are 'forerunners of what is now known as "wu-hsia hsiao-shuo 武俠小說" (chivalrous fiction), still very popular and in steady production outside mainland China [...].'¹² Here, Ma would appear to be tracing the origins of "chivalrous fiction", or contemporary martial arts fiction, to a subgenre of *xiaoshuo* known as *gongan xiaoshuo* 公案小說. Ma explains why he has made no attempt to translate the term *gongan* 公案, offering as reason that 'the prevailing notion is so ever-changing that even the central elements of criminal act and related legal solution, so essential for identification, are completely overshadowed by prodigious feats of arms in the long novels.'¹³ According to Ma, the real heroes of these forerunners of contemporary "chivalrous fiction" are the knights-errant.¹⁴ Yet, four years later, in his "The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* Stories" (1975), Ma would appear to have shifted his focus from the chivalrous behaviour of the knights-errant to the

¹¹ Ibid., p. 331, note 49.

¹² Ma Yau-woon, *The Pao-Kung Tradition in Chinese Popular Literature* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1971), p. 11.

¹³ Ibid., p. 12. Ma Yau-woon re-affirms his stand as he concludes, 'The refusal to have the term *kung-an* defined and translated in a definitive manner at the beginning of this survey may now be adequately justified.' In his 'Kung-an Fiction', *T'oung Pao*, 65 (1979), 200-59 (p. 259). Elsewhere, *gongan xiaoshuo* 公案小說 has been rendered as "public cases", "crime and detective stories", or as "judgement *xiaoshuo*", as in Adrian Hsia, 'The Popular Novel in Nineteenth-Century China', p. 467.

¹⁴ Ma Yau-woon, *The Pao-Kung Tradition in Chinese Popular Literature*, p. 10.

knights-errant themselves as protagonists in the novel, as witnessed by his switching to the term "knight-errant novels" in describing *wuxia xiaoshuo*. Ma argues that "knight-errant novels" produced by prolific writers in both Hong Kong and Taiwan for over a twenty-year period have finally drawn the serious attention of intellectuals, giving cause to heated debates among literary critics in the Taiwan newspaper *China Times* 《中國時報》 in 1973.¹⁵

Perry E. Link would appear to be one of the first Western scholars who took a serious interest in modern martial arts fiction. In his *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies: Popular Fiction in Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Cities* (1981), Link explored in great length martial arts fiction produced during the first few decades of this century, situating its popular appeal within the larger literary context of the time -- the rise of the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School (*yuan yang hu die pai* 鴛鴦蝴蝶派),¹⁶ as well as

¹⁵ In his 'The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* Stories', p. 198, Ma Yau-woon recounts: 'In the summer and the autumn of 1973, the discussion of the knight-errant in Chinese popular literature, particularly in the knight-errant novels voluminously put out by Hong Kong and Taiwan writers in the past two decades, became a conspicuous topic in the literary circles of Taiwan.'

¹⁶ In *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, pp. 7-8, Perry E. Link observes that:

A word is in order on the use of the label "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School." It was first used in the late 1910s to refer disparagingly to the classical-style love stories of a small, but very widely read, group of authors who made liberal use of the traditional symbols of mandarin ducks and butterflies for pairs of lovers. Originally the term was used narrowly and precisely to refer to this group, including Hsu Chen-ya, Li Ting-i, Wu Shuang-je and a few others, plus the group's imitators. But beginning in the early 1920s, the term was given a dramatically larger scope by ardent young writers of the May Fourth Movement. Cheng Chen-to, Mao Tun and many others began using the term to lead an attack on *all* kinds of popular old-style fiction. This included not only love stories but "social" novels, "knight-errant" novels, "scandal" novels, "detective" novels, "imagination" novels, "comic" novels and many other kinds. The consequent ambiguity in applying the term has persisted to the present day. Communist writings have meant it to include every kind of "old-style" fiction, while non-Communist writings generally use it to mean love stories only. A certain amount of confusion and even acrimony has attended the ambiguity [...].

In addition to the context of Chinese tradition, it is important to view "Butterfly" fiction in an international context. Without overlooking its distinctively Chinese elements, one may easily recognize that various aspects of its historical setting, as well as some of its literary characteristics, are remarkably similar to those of urban popular fiction in other countries which have been part of the global spread of the Industrial Revolution.

For more details on the "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School", see also Leo Ou-fan Lee, 'Literary Trends I: the Quest for Modernity, 1895-1927', in *The Cambridge History of China 12*, ed. by John K.

against the cultural and socio-political climate prevailing in China. Link perceives this subgenre of the Mandarin and Butterfly School as "fiction for comfort" as "'knight-errant fiction" (*wu-hsia hsiao-shuo*) told tales of righteous heroes who topple evil powerholders and set things right, thus providing the enjoyment of vicarious victories where real-life victories were impossible.'¹⁷ He points out also that 'the more obvious marks of a knight-errant story are, of course, the knight-errant's extraordinary abilities and semi-mysterious manner.'¹⁸

Robert Hegel claims that the Chinese novel in its later development during the Qing Dynasty constituted two separate traditions, as speculated upon by scholars in the West, explaining that 'one is the "scholarly novel" or the "literary novel"; the other is characterized by the popular "swordsman fiction" (*wu-hsia hsiao-shuo*), the "chapbook tradition."¹⁹ It follows from Hegel that "swordsman fiction" belongs to the "chapbook tradition", linguistically and artistically quite different from the "scholarly novel". Again, while commenting on Wilt. L. Idema's using the terms "literary novels" and "chapbooks" to divide mature Ming and Qing novels into two general categories in his "Distinguishing Levels of Audience for Ming-Ch'ing Vernacular Literature" (1985), Hegel writes that 'Idema, following the Chinese lead, tends to view anonymous works as generally falling into this second category, particularly historical fiction and "swordsman novels" (*wu-hsia hsiao-shuo*).'²⁰ Again, it follows from Hegel that the

Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 452-64, especially the section 'Butterfly Fiction and the Transition to May Fourth, 1911-17', pp. 461-64.

¹⁷ Link, *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, p. 20.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁹ Hegel, *The Novel in Nineteenth-Century China*, p. 3

²⁰ Hegel, 'Distinguishing Levels of Audience for Ming-Ch'ing Vernacular Literature', in *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, ed. by David G. Johnson and others (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 112-42 (p. 125).

prevailing practice among critics was to put "swordsman novels" under "chapbooks",²¹ which catered to a less scholarly populace in China.

In his "Rhetoric", found in the *Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature* (1985), Karl Kao cites martial arts fiction as an example to illustrate the use of gradation as a device of intensification in traditional Chinese literature, pointing out that:

Syntactic figures like *ts'eng-ti* 層遞 (gradation ...) often appear on a textual level as a device of intensification (one of the most common methods of sustaining the reader's interest in the *wu-hsia hsiao-shuo* 武俠小說 [stories of gallants and heroes] is the successive introduction of characters who are increasingly more powerful and more skillful.²²

Kao seems to suggest that one of the essential attributes of *wuxia xiaoshuo*, or "stories of gallants and heroes" as rendered by him, is the ability to sustain the reader's interest by drawing in characters increasingly endowed as the story progresses.

In his "The Commonwealth of Chinese Literature: A German Perspective" (1986), German sinologist Helmut Martin claims that Hong Kong literature has not yet materialized, remarking that 'alongside a flourishing printed entertainment business

²¹ According to Wilt L. Idema, chapbooks utilize a classical style much simplified, lacking literary polish while the literary novels are more inclined to using vernacular language in a creative manner, in his *Chinese Vernacular Fiction*, pp. xi-xii, quoted in *ibid.*, footnote 28. Hegel refers to chapbooks as popular novels 'of considerable less intellectual seriousness and self-conscious artistry [...] often did appear in cheap, poorly printed editions with narratives that concentrate on action rather than ideas; significantly, they tend to be less moralistic -- and less colloquial in style -- than the more dignified works of the form.' In his *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China*, p. 264, note 8. For their contents, see P.J. MacLagan, 'Notes on Some Chinese Chap-Books', *China Review*, 22.6 (1896-97), 782-86. MacLagan also pointed out that chapbooks were popular literature found in crudely-printed books, obtainable at any book-stall for a few cash each in late nineteenth-century China, p. 782. Thwing might well be referring to as chapbooks what he described as the small story books of which the shopman often had a copy to hand and the principal story-books for sale in a Chinese book store as 'printed in abominable print, but still enjoyed, and coolies and boatmen will sit up half the night recounting tales of heroes long passed away.' In Thwing, 'Chinese Fiction', p. 759.

²² Karl Kao, 'Rhetoric', in *Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature*, ed. by William H. Nienhauser, Jr. and others (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 121-37 (p. 129).

literature as for instance the wuxia genre of Chin Yung [Jin Yong] and others, [...], we find only few specific Hongkong-related texts which might become an acknowledged part of Chinese literature in general.²³ It can be argued that Martin has adopted a more appreciative, albeit sympathetic, attitude towards martial arts fiction, which flourishes as a commercialized popular form of literature in Hong Kong. He considers these works, which provides a source of entertainment to the reading public, an acknowledged genre of Chinese literature.

Wong Wai-leung points out in his *Hong Kong Literature in the Context of Modern Chinese Literature* (1987) that 'the literature of Hong Kong is extremely diversified. It ranges from the narrowly circulating poetry to the widely popular "martial art" fiction (*wu-hsia hsiao-shuo* 武俠小說), which is best selling not only locally but also in the Mainland, Taiwan and Overseas.'²⁴ Wong highlights the immense popularity of the "martial art" [sic] fiction among Chinese speakers worldwide, which may in fact, turn out to be a lucrative business for some writers and publishers. Unlike Martin, Wong believes that Hong Kong literature does exist, with "martial art" fiction featuring as a leading genre, not only locally but also overseas.

In her "Liu Yichang's *Jiutu*: Literature, Gender, and Fantasy in Contemporary Hong Kong" (1993), Wendy Larson points out that the writer protagonist in Liu Yichang's 劉以鬯 novel *Jiutu* 《酒徒》 [The drunkard] has to churn out martial arts fiction for the sole purpose of making a living in Hong Kong when he should have devoted his time to making a career in serious literature. She further observes:

²³ Helmut Martin, 'The Commonwealth of Chinese Literature: A German Perspective', in *The Commonwealth of Chinese Literature: Papers of the International Reisenburg Conference, West Germany, July 1986*, 2 vols (Reisenburg: International Reisenburg Conference, 1986), II, p. 3 of Helmut Martin's paper as the collection is not paginated as a whole.

²⁴ Wong Wai-leung, p. 20.

The author carries out the contrast by comparing *The Old Man and the Sea* to *Jianghu qixia zhuan* [Tales of marvelous knights in a dangerous world], and the "Manifesto of Surrealism" with "surreal" knight-errantry novels; he fantasizes that Hemingway is unable to sell his work in Hong Kong and is asked by publishers to write knight errantry novels.²⁵

Larson points to the inferior status of "knight-errantry novels" when she explains what kind of book *Jianghu qixia zhuan* 《江湖奇俠傳》 is in a footnote:

Jianghu qixia zhuan (1922), a famous knight-errantry novel in 160 chapters by a well-known practitioner of this art, Xiang Kairan (1890-1957), who used the penname Pingjiang Bu Xiao Sheng. Knight-errantry novels are not taken seriously by Chinese critics, who brand them as a lowly form of entertainment.²⁶

Despite its being branded as "a lowly form of entertainment" by Chinese critics, as Larson observes, martial arts fiction did draw the attention of a scholar in Germany. Kai Portmann's *Der Fliegende Fuchsvom Scheeberg: Die Gattung des chinesischen Ritterromans (wuxia xiaoshuo) und der Erfolgsautor Jin Yong* (1994) would appear to be the first serious piece of academic research, undertaken at the Ruhr University, on a contemporary martial arts novel and reported in a Western language. It might be useful to examine how Portmann introduces his research to the West by citing his abstract here:

When in December 1987 an international Conference on Chinese Knight-Errant Literature (*wuxia xiaoshuo*) was held in Hongkong [Hong Kong], this literary genre was officially acknowledged by literary scholars for the first time. For despite its centuries old tradition, *wuxia xiaoshuo* has been virtually neglected and considered throughout the history of Chinese literature to be of inferior artistic value. However, the Chinese people have enthusiastically consumed stories about upright and nonconformist knight-errants [knights-errant] since they first appeared on the stage of literature. Even now millions of Chinese readers not only in [in] the People's Republic of China but also on [in] Taiwan and in Hongkong [Hong Kong] devour vast amounts of knight-errant literature, published in newspapers, magazines and books. For the most part these stories and novels lack artistic quality, written as they are with commercial interests uppermost and to satisfy the

²⁵ Wendy Larson, 'Liu Yichang's *Jiutu*: Literature, Gender, and Fantasy in Contemporary Hong Kong', *Modern Chinese Literature*, 7 (1993), 89-103 (p. 97).

²⁶ Ibid., footnote 8.

needs of the average reader. Only a few writers have rendered outstanding services to the genre of knight-errant literature, one of these being Jin Yong who is generally regarded as the most talented master of the genre by many experts and readers.

This study presents the life and work of Jin Yong, with focus on an analysis of his novel *The Flying Fox of the Snowy Mountain*, in the context of the evolution of Chinese knight-errant literature, thus introducing a literary genre which represents an important aspect of Chinese literary history, flourishing especially in the 20th century.²⁷

Portmann introduces as Chinese "knight-errant literature" the literary genre which flourishes in this century, most of which he finds lacking in artistic value, penned simply for profits. Yet this "knight-errant literature" has been devoured by Chinese all over the world. It would appear that this literary genre was officially recognized for the first time when literary critics and scholars from different countries converged in Hong Kong in 1987 to hold an international conference on martial arts fiction.²⁸

Like other critics and scholars, translators who tackled this genre in contemporary Chinese literature have also resorted to various means of introducing the term *wuxia xiaoshuo* to the West. The introductory comments found in each of the five translated works may reveal how individual translators have tackled this translational problem. Robin Wu,²⁹ pioneer translator of Jin Yong's martial arts fiction into English,

²⁷ Kai Portmann, *Der Fliegende Fuchsvom Scheeberg: Die Gattung des chinesischen Ritterromans (wuxia xiaoshuo) und der Erfolgsautor Jin Yong* (Bochum: N. Brockmeyer, 1994), p. 254.

²⁸ Synopses of major papers presented at the First International Conference on Martial Arts Fiction, December 28-30, 1987 are found in Hu Wenbin 胡文彬 ed. *Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo ci dian* 《中國武俠小說辭典》 [Encyclopedia of Chinese martial arts fiction] (Shijiazhuang: Huashan wenyi chubanshe, 1992), pp. 880-86. See also Fan Zhihou 樊志厚, 'Wu xia xiao shuo chu deng xue shu dian tang -- shou ge guo ji Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo de yan tao hui hou ji zhi yi 武俠小說初登學術殿堂 -- 首個國際中國武俠小說的研討會後記之一' [Martial arts fiction's academic debut -- an afterword on the First International Conference on Martial Arts Fiction, 1], *Ming Pao Monthly* 《明報月刊》, 2 (1988), 60-62 and Kuang Jianxing 鄺健行, 'Tu po yu bu zu -- shou ge guo ji Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo de yan tao hui hou ji zhi er 突破與不足 -- 首個國際中國武俠小說的研討會後記之二' [Breakthrough and room for improvement -- an afterword on the First International Conference on Martial Arts Fiction, 2], *Ming Pao Monthly*, 2 (1988), 63-64.

²⁹ I looked up Robin Wu 伍子禎, now a lawyer, in his office in New York city in the summer of 1987, wishing to find out how he got started on his translation project. Wu came originally from Hong Kong. His family moved to New York city when he was twelve. He graduated with a B.A. in American

introduces to his readers in the opening paragraph of his translation *Flying Fox of the Snowy Mountain* (1972) by Jin Yong, which was serialized in four parts in *Bridge* magazine, the setting of a martial arts fiction. He explains that:

For those who are not familiar with the term 'the world of the martial arts,' it is a world peopled by men and women skilled in offensive and defensive combat. Different styles of fighting distinguish the different schools in the martial world.

Some may specialize in sword-fighting, other may concentrate on whips or darts, or any other paraphernalia that has the potentiality of inflicting mortal death. With each school, a fraternity of members (men and women are equals in this world) develops, bound together by loyalty. Terms such as 'martial brother' or 'martial uncle' do not denote family ties. Rather they denote respect for skill.³⁰

Christine Corniot introduces her translated work *Les Quatre Brigands du Huabei* (1990) by Gu Long as:

Le «roman de gong-fu» chinois (*wuxia xiaoshuo*), aux origines anciennes, est un genre populaire très vivant, se prêtant de surcroît fort bien, de nos jours, aux adaptations filmées, livrées par épisodes aux téléspectateurs. Il suscite d'emblée la comparaison avec le roman «dix-neuvième» européen de cape et d'épée.³¹

Corniot introduces Gu Long's work as "«roman de gong-fu» chinois" and "*wuxia xiaoshuo*" and compares it to "le roman «dix-neuvième» européen de cape et d'épée", emphasizing its great popularity as evident in its adaptations into various audio-visual media. She points out that the long history of this literary genre can be traced to ancient times.

Literature in the early '70s. An editor of the defunct *Bridge* magazine happened to know Jin Yong and asked if Wu would be interested in translating Jin Yong's work for the magazine. Wu accepted the challenge. Later, he got so busy that he was forced to summarize Jin Yong's *Xue shan fei hu* 《雪山飛狐》, instead of translating it in full, into *Flying Fox of the Snowy Mountain*.

³⁰ Robin Wu, trans., *Flying Fox of the Snowy Mountain* by Jin Yong, *Bridge*, Part I, 1.4 (March/April 1972), 42-49 (p. 42).

³¹ Christine Corniot, introduction, *Les Quatre Brigands du Huabei* by Gu Long (Arles and Paris: Philippe Picquier, 1990), pp. 5-7 (p. 5).

Robert Chard³² introduces his translation of Huanzhulouzhū's work *Blades from the Willows* (1991) as:

Blades from the Willows belongs to a class of Chinese popular literature known by the term *wuxia xiaoshuo*, which may be translated as 'novels of martial chivalry', or simply 'martial arts novels'. The wide appeal of the genre is evident in the extraordinary proliferation of novels, comic books, films, and television serials throughout the Chinese-speaking world, but it has seldom been taken seriously as a form of literature.³³

Chard introduces Huanzhulouzhū's work as "*wuxia xiaoshuo*", "novels of martial chivalry" and "martial arts novels." He points out that despite its worldwide popularity among Chinese-speaking communities, as evidenced by the various audio-visual media reproduced, it has not yet been recognized as a literary genre in its own right.

In my own introduction to Jin Yong's *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* (1993) by Jin Yong, I state that:

Martial arts fiction, with a long history dating back to the Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618-907), is one of the few surviving Chinese literary forms which can claim a direct link with traditional popular literature. These tales of knight-errants [sic] gradually emerged as popular fiction in the second half of the nineteenth century.[...]

This literary genre, properly known to contemporary readers as *wuxia xiaoshuo* which literally means the martial-chivalric novel, is really popular literature verging on serious literature. This genre of literature is devoured by Chinese

³² Chard was teaching at St. Anne's College, Oxford when I last contacted him in June, 1994. He translated Huanzhulouzhū's 還珠樓主 *Liu hu xia yin* 《柳湖俠隱》 while he was studying for a Ph.D. at Berkeley. His research interests are traditional Chinese religion, the supernatural world, and history in general. Huanzhulouzhū caught his attention many years ago when he was a graduate student because of his wide knowledge of Chinese religious and esoteric traditions, and he could not understand why the whole *wuxia* tradition was largely ignored by Western scholars of Chinese literature. He decided to translate *Blades from the Willows* out of sheer youthful defiance. E-mail to the author on 10 June, 1994.

³³ Robert Chard, translator's preface, *Blades from the Willows* by Huanzhulouzhū (London: Wellsweep, 1991), pp. 7-11 (p. 7).

readers from all walks of life, finding great popularity not only in Hong Kong, but also in overseas Chinese communities around the world.³⁴

I introduce Jin Yong's novel as "martial arts fiction", "tales of knights-errant", "*wuxia xiaoshuo*", and "martial-chivalric novel", emphasizing the long historical traditions associated with this genre. Like Corniot and Chard, I highlight also the great popularity martial arts fiction enjoys among Chinese speakers all over the world.

John Minford³⁵ simply introduces the works written by Jin Yong, alias Louis Cha, as martial arts fiction in his translation *The Deer and the Cauldron -- the Adventures of a Chinese Trickster: Two Chapters from a Novel* (1994). However, in his qualifying note along the margin, he laments the inadequacy of this term as well as other alternatives available to him:

This is an woefully inadequate English term, but to date I have been unable to find anything better as an equivalent for *wuxia xiaoshuo* 武俠小說. I can't say I prefer the alternatives offered: Stories about Swordsmen (C.T. Hsia), Chivalric Fiction (James Liu), Stories of Chivalry (Liu Ts'un-yan), Novels of Martial Chivalry, or Novels of Fantasy and Martial Arts Adventure (Chard).³⁶

Minford perceives the danger of calling this literary genre martial arts fiction, especially for his own two-chapter translation of *The Deer and the Cauldron*, explaining that 'the problem with "Martial Arts" is that it leaves untranslated the *xia*, and instead substitutes *shu* 術. In certain important senses (especially for *Deer*) "picaresque romance" is close,

³⁴ Olivia Mok, introduction, *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* by Jin Yong (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1993), pp. xxi-xxiv (p. xxi).

³⁵ John Minford solicited from Jin Yong the translation of *Lu ding ji* 《鹿鼎記》 on a rather handsome sum. I was verbally informed on this by Jin Yong as he tried to make me the same offer a few years ago, which I declined. In 1996, Minford obtained a grant totalling over HK\$370,000 from the University Grants Committee to translate Jin Yong's *She diao ying xiong zhuan* 《射鵰英雄傳》, vol. 1 into English. See Minford's interview in *Ming Pao* 《明報》, 18 March, 1996, F4.

³⁶ John Minford, introduction, *Lu ding ji* 《鹿鼎記》 *The Deer and the Cauldron -- the Adventures of a Chinese Trickster: Two Chapters from a Novel* by Jin Yong, p. 2, note 2 along the margin.

but for the majority of novels produced within the genre it is misleading.³⁷ It can be argued that Minford could have overlooked the fact that the knight-errantry aspect of martial arts fiction is given over more to the martial arts aspect as pointed out earlier by James J.Y. Liu, who remarks that the genre is more often concerned with 'physical culture and methods of fencing and boxing than with chivalry'.³⁸ The fact that martial arts novels are often called "stories of swordsmen" may also point in the same direction.

Thus, *wuxia xiaoshuo* as a literary genre has come to be known by a host of names, such as "novels of martial chivalry", "martial arts novels", "knight-errant literature", "knight-errantry novels", "swordsman fiction", "chivalrous fiction", "new novels and stories about swordsmen" or simply known by its transliteration "*wu xia xiao shuo*", "*wuxia* genre", or "*wuxia* fiction." The genre may sometimes also be referred to as "kungfu novels", "swashbuckling novels", or "cloak-and-dagger stories", which is the French "roman de «cape et d'épée»". "The WWW Guide to Louis Cha (Jin Yong)" (c.1996) sums up by saying that 'these novels belong to the *wuxia xiaoshuo* genre, also known as "swashbuckling stories", "chivalric fiction", and "novels of fantasy and martial arts adventure".' It can be argued that the numerous terms used, sometimes by one writer or translator in one single text, to refer to this particular genre suggests that the writers or translators may feel rather insecure about their translational choice when an unrelated genre is introduced for the first time into the West. It seems also to suggest that an equivalent literary genre such as the martial arts fiction does not exist in the West or that martial arts fiction as a literary genre has not even been recognized in the West. But it would appear that "martial arts fiction" or "martial arts novels" may more likely establish itself as standard usage, as all three English translations of this genre published so far as well as book reviews or other commentaries in English have

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, p. 134.

adopted this term,³⁹ although "wuxia novel" appears to be used more frequently on the Internet. The term "martial arts fiction" will be used throughout this study when referring to this literary genre, particularly works penned by Jin Yong, contemporary Chinese writer now based in Hong Kong, whose fourteen titles have created classics of its own type.

Martial Arts Fiction in Libraries

The choice of an appropriate term to introduce this genre to the West may confront not only scholars and translators, but also librarians responsible for cataloguing such works in English. One could argue that the extent to which martial arts fiction has been recognized as a literary genre might also be gauged from how martial arts novels have been classified by libraries in the West. A quick survey accessing several on-line catalogues, entering as subject or keyword "martial arts fiction" and as author individual names of major writers, to find out how martial arts novels written by leading writers, particularly Jin Yong's, have been catalogued in the British Library and the Library of Congress, the world's two largest public libraries as well as academic

³⁹ See Chang Tsong-zung's 'Bad Boys Can't Read in a Climate of Fear', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 8 August 1985, p. 39 and also his 'Martial-Arts Fiction Keeps the Past Alive', *ibid.*, p. 40; Wong Wai-leung, p. 20; Robert Chard's translator's preface to Huanzhulouzhuzhu's *Blades from the Willows*, pp. 7-11 (pp. 7-8) uses "martial arts novels" and "martial arts genre" as well as "novels of martial chivalry"; Richard Vivian's review on the *Blades from the Willows* in his 'Convuluted Kungfu Pot-boiler', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 November 1991, p. 31; T.L. Tsim's foreword to Jin Yong's *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, pp. ix-xi (p. x) uses "martial arts fiction" as well as "wuxia fiction"; Olivia Mok's introduction to *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, pp. xxi-xxiv (pp. xxi-xxii); Katherine Foresier's interview of Jin Yong in 'The Fighting Spirit', *South China Morning Post*, 19 March 1994, Review 9; John Minford's introduction to Jin Yong's *The Deer and the Cauldron -- the Adventures of a Chinese Trickster: Two Chapters from a Novel*, pp. 1-14; Laura Hua Wu's review of 'Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain by Jin Yong, trans. Olivia Mok', *China Review International*, 2.1 (1995), 144-47; Michelle Man-fong Chan's commentary in her M.A. translation project 'On Translating Jin Yong's *The Book and the Sword*' (unpublished M.A. dissertation, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong, 1994), pp. 1-71; Wong Kin-bun's commentary in his M.A. translation project 'An Extended Translation of Chapter One of Louis Cha's *She Diao Ying Xiong Zhuan*' (unpublished M.A. dissertation, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong, 1994), pp. 1-20; Dora Shuk Ching Lok's commentary in her M.A. translation project 'Translating Jin Yong's *The Young Fox Volant*' (unpublished M.A. dissertation, City University of Hong Kong, 1996), pp. 1-52; and a collection of selected papers presented at a conference on "The Question of Reception: Martial Arts Fiction in English Translation", March 22-23, 1996, Lingnan College, Hong Kong which appeared in a special issue, *Martial Arts Fiction in English Translation*, in *Translation Quarterly*, 5-6 (1997).

libraries at the School of Oriental and African Studies, the Harvard University, and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology⁴⁰ seems to reveal the same insecurity, if not inadequacy, among bibliophiles. The British Library shows only one entry under the subject heading "martial arts fiction" -- *Revenge of the Shoguns Ninja* (1984) by Katsumi Toda whereas Jin Yong's *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* goes under "martial arts fiction [in] Chinese translated into English". A search by author failed to yield any other popular works under "martial arts fiction". This alone cannot be taken to mean public libraries in Britain profess no interest in martial arts fiction. On the contrary, Jin Yong's novels have been acquired by a number of county libraries, such as the Coventry Public Library and the Gloucestershire Public Library, as catalogued on the 1993 BLCMP (Birmingham Libraries Cooperative Machination Project) microfiche films. Detailed information as to how these books are classified, however, has not been made available on the 1993 BLCMP Union Serials Catalogues. Like the British counterpart, the Library of Congress lists also only one entry -- *Der Fliegende Fuchsvom Scheeberg: Die Gattung des chinesischen Ritterromans (wuxia xiaoshuo) und der Erfolgsautor Jin Yong* (1994) by Kai Portmann, although this US public library holds many Chinese martial arts novels, including even a few translations into Vietnamese. This may show that either the works written by martial arts novelists held by the Library of Congress have not yet drawn the attention of cataloguing librarians to be identified as "martial arts fiction" proper or only works having as subject matter martial arts fiction acquired recently are catalogued as "martial arts fiction". It can also be argued that martial arts novels, at least up to the present time, have not yet been recognized enough to warrant being catalogued as a subgenre on their own under Chinese literature, assuming that the staff at the Library of Congress are

⁴⁰ A pilot survey was carried out on 11-13 June, 1996 by accessing the on-line catalogues on the OPAC system of the world's two largest public libraries, the British Library and the Library of Congress as well as three academic libraries in the School of Oriental and African Studies, the Harvard University, and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, supposedly known to contain the largest numbers of martial arts fiction in their respective countries, and with on-line catalogues accessible on the OPAC. The data have been verified at various stages, up until August 3, 1996.

competent enough to distinguish a martial arts novel from other Chinese novels. This survey also shows that the academic libraries may not appear to fare any better than the two largest public libraries in the world as far as cataloguing this genre is concerned, implying, perhaps, that the popularity of martial arts fiction has not yet spread to the library circle or martial arts fiction has not yet been widely known among cataloguing librarians. Of the fifty-six entries included under the subject heading "martial arts fiction" at the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, only six belong to martial arts fiction, the rest are books or musical tapes on martial arts, be they Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Indonesian, Okinawa, Malaysian, Nigerian or Japanese, including religious and philosophical aspects of martial arts as well. It can be argued that SOAS Library has not done a proper job in cataloguing, lumping materials on martial arts as well under "martial arts fiction", or the library may have found a different application for the subject heading "martial arts fiction". Or the worst scenario could possibly be that the computing software for retrieving library materials at SOAS Library is far from being discriminating. It would appear that the large numbers of martial arts fiction already acquired by SOAS Library have not yet been identified properly or have been catalogued loosely as fiction or not classified at all, as only three out of fifty-five original Chinese martial arts novels by major writers held by the library have been classified as martial arts fiction (see Appendix 1A). The library at Harvard University, where a large number of martial arts novels can also be accessed readily on-line like SOAS Library, lists thirty-four items under "martial arts fiction", fifteen of which are martial arts novels, the rest are martial arts fiction-related materials, such as bibliography, dictionaries, history and criticism. Harvard University Library has labelled thirteen of the forty-one original Chinese martial arts novels as martial arts fiction (see Appendix 1B). It can be argued that the greater number of books being classified as martial arts fiction by Harvard University Library, compared to those at SOAS Library, could perhaps be explained by the fact many copies of Jin Yong's fiction were acquired only in more recent years, especially after he had been recognized as one of the greatest contemporary Chinese writers and

acclaimed internationally as a master in martial arts fiction by foreign academics.⁴¹ As only novels published after 1992, meaning those that were acquired after 1992, but not all, were classified as "martial arts fiction" by Harvard University Library, one could argue that this could be connected to the launching of the first martial arts fiction in English translation *Blades from the Willows* in 1991. Although this novel has not been classified as a "martial arts fiction" as such, notes describing it as "a Chinese novel of fantasy and martial arts adventures" are found in the catalogue. Harvard University Library has also classified some of the works as "kung fu novels", as has the library at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (see Appendix IC), but not SOAS Library, which has used only "martial arts fiction", if at all. The data collected so far seem to suggest that SOAS Library may have been acquainted with the use of that term for quite some time. Another observation one could make is that for different copies of the same title acquired at different times, the ones acquired at a later stage would appear to be catalogued in a more specific manner, as evident from examples found in Appendices 1A and 1B, assuming that libraries have always tried to acquire the latest copies available in placing orders for books and assuming again that libraries have tried also to catalogue their books immediately upon acquisition. At the SOAS Library, the 1984 copy of Huanzhulou's *Shu shan jian xia xin zhuan* 《蜀山劍俠新傳》 received "nil" classification, whereas its 1989 copy was classified as "martial arts fiction"; the 1978 copy of Jin Yong's *Bi xue jia* 《碧血劍》 received "nil" classification, whereas its 1986 copy was classified as "Chinese fiction". Likewise, at the Harvard University Library, the 1975 copy of Jin Yong's *Shu jian en chou lu* 《書劍恩仇錄》 was classified

⁴¹ Jin Yong 金庸, whose real name is Cha Liangyong 查良鏞, alias Louis Cha, was awarded an OBE in 1981, conferred an honorary degree of Doctor of Social Sciences by the University of Hong Kong in 1986 and an honorary degree of Degree of Literature by the University of British Columbia in 1992. He received the Chevalier de la Legion d'honneur from France for his contribution to literature in 1992. He was made an Honorary Fellow of St. Anthony's College of Oxford University and Wynflete Fellow of Magdalen College, also at Oxford. The Citation at the University of British Columbia reads: "There are few literary giants in the world. I present one to you now....He has written fifteen [fourteen] novels and is the most widely read novelist in Chinese communities throughout the world. His novels have been translated into many other languages, and used as the foundation for movies, plays, operas, and musical poems." Quoted in *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* (1993), p. 382.

as "kung fu novel", whereas its 1994 copy as "martial arts fiction"; the 1980 copy of *Xue shan fei hu* 《雪山飛狐》 was classified as "fiction", whereas its 1994 copy as "martial arts fiction". If a consistent pattern were to be detected in this tendency to fine-tune classification of martial arts fiction in the future, one could perhaps argue that this genre may begin to see signs of becoming increasingly recognized as a literary form by libraries in the West.

The following table, updated till 6 September, 1997, shows how *Les Quatre Brigands du Huabei* (1990), *Blades from the Willows* (1991), *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* (1993), and *The Deer and the Cauldron -- the Adventures of a Chinese Trickster: Two Chapters from a Novel* (1994), the four translated works on martial arts fiction brought out so far, have been classified in different libraries:

	British Library	Library of Congress	SOAS Library	Harvard U Library	HKUST Library	Oxford U Library	CUHK Library
<i>Brigands</i>	X	X	m a f	X	X	X	X
<i>Blades</i>	O	X	Ch f	see Note 1	X	O	O
<i>Fox</i>	see Note 2	X	Ch f / maf	O	O	O	O
<i>Deer</i>	X	X ⁴²	X	X	X	O ⁴³	O

Note 1: A Chinese novel of fantasy and martial arts adventures

Note 2: Martial arts fiction [in] Chinese translated into English

Keys: X = not held; O = not classified; Ch f = Chinese fiction; m a f = martial arts fiction

Table 1. Classification of Four Translated Martial Arts Novels at Different Libraries

⁴² The Library of Congress included in its online catalogue *The Deer and the Cauldron: A Martial Arts Novel* by Louis Cha [Jin Yong], translated and edited by John Minford, Vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press) (ISBN:1095903234), which is not yet in the Library of Congress, with its projected publication date being September, 1997. Online, Telnet to LOCIS, September 6, 1997.

⁴³ Not found in an earlier online OPAC search made during June- August, 1996, but was found on September 1, 1997.

It can be argued that, following from this table, only a specialized library like SOAS Library would seem to be more receptive to a new foreign genre as reflected in its ready acquisition of the works in stock and its being more specific, albeit meticulous, in cataloguing this popular Chinese literary genre in translation. The sample data presented here, although rather small, would also seem to indicate that academic institutions, particularly those offering Chinese literature, may appear more ready to acquire this new foreign genre in translation than public libraries, as these books may meet specific demands of scholars or students working on Chinese literature in general, and contemporary literature in particular.

Martial Arts Fiction in a Nutshell

James J.Y. Liu's *The Chinese Knight-errant* (1967) traces the forerunners of contemporary martial arts fiction between the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and the pre-war period in 1940's, illustrated with translations or synopses of representative stories on knights-errant and their chivalric deeds down the ages.⁴⁴ However, the *huaben* 話本 genre, which is also rich in tales of knights-errant, has not been included in Liu's book. Ma Yau-woon has filled this gap in the Song story-tellers' prompt-books in his "The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* stories" (1975). The other missing link on martial arts fiction since the post-war period has been filled by literature written in Chinese, produced in Hong Kong and Taiwan, and in more recent years, also in China.⁴⁵ Dr. Hua Laura Wu,

⁴⁴ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, pp. 81-137.

⁴⁵ Much has been written on martial arts fiction in Chinese in recent years, varying in quality and scholarship. More useful literature includes: Hou Jian 侯健, 'Wu xia xiao shuo lun 武俠小說論 [On martial arts fiction]', in *Zhongguo xiao shuo bi jiao yan jiu* 《中國小說比較研究》 [Comparative studies of Chinese ficiton] (Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi, 1983), pp. 169-95; Chen Xiaolin 陳曉林, 'Min zu wen xue de yuan liu yu wu xia xiao shuo de ding wei 民族文學的遠流與武俠小說的定位 [The origins of popular literature and the status of martial arts fiction]', in *Qingcheng shi jiu xia* 《青城十九俠》 [Nineteen knights-errant of the Green mountain], by Huanzhulouzhuzhu 還珠樓主, ed. by Ye Hongsheng 葉洪生 (Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1985), pp. 1-19; Cui Fengyuan 崔奉源, *Zhongguo gu dian duan pian xia yi xiao shuo yan jiu* 《中國古典短篇俠義小說研究》 [A study of classical tales of knight-errantry] (Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1986); Wang Hailin 王海林, *Wu xia xiao shuo shi lue* 《武俠小說史略》 [A brief history of Chinese martial arts fiction] (Shanxi: Beiyue wenyi chubanshe, 1988); Zhang Gansheng 張贛生, 'Wu xia xiao shuo zhi yuan liu 武俠小說之源流 [Origins of martial

whose area of specialism is Chinese fiction, seems to have captured succinctly the evolution of this literary genre in her review article on *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* in *China Review International* (1995):

Wuxia or martial arts fiction is a unique Chinese literary genre, of which Jin Yong, the author of the present title, *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, is its most talented and innovative writer. This fictional genre has both ancient and recent antecedents in its literary genealogy. Historiography, poetry, and drama all celebrated knight-errantry by accentuating such qualities as altruism and justice, personal loyalty and mutual trust, honor and fame, physical and moral courage, and a daunting defiance of the laws of the land and the conventions of society. A glorification of chivalry was also popular subject matter for various forms of

arts fiction]', in *Min guo tong su xiao shuo lun gao* 《民國通俗小說論稿》 [Papers on Chinese popular fiction of the Republican era] (Chongqing: Chongqing chubanshe, 1991); pp. 336-64; Liu Yinbo 劉蔭柏, *Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo shi* 《中國武俠小說史》 [A history of Chinese martial arts fiction] (Shijiazhuang: Huashan wenyi chubanshe, 1992); Chen Pingyuan 陳平原, *Qian gu wen ren xia ke meng -- wu xia xiao shuo lei xing yan jiu* 《千古文人俠客夢 -- 武俠小說類型研究》 [Chivalric dreams of the literati down the ages -- a genre study of martial arts fiction] (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1992); Department of Chinese, Tamkang University, ed., *Xia yu Zhongguo wen hua* 《俠與中國文化》 [Knight-errantry and Chinese culture] (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shudian, 1993). Contemporary martial arts fiction received more detailed treatment in Luo Liqun 羅立群, *Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo shi* 《中國武俠小說史》 [History on Chinese martial arts fiction] (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1990); Xuan Senzhong 宣森鐘, *Jian qi piao xiang -- Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo jian shang* 《劍氣飄香 -- 中國武俠小說鑒賞》 [Sword's fragrance -- martial arts fiction in appreciation] (Nanning: Guangxi remin chubanshe, 1992); Chen Mo 陳墨, *Hai wai xin wu xia xiao shuo lun* 《海外新武俠小說論》 [A study of new martial arts fiction overseas] (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 1994); and Ye Hongsheng 葉洪生, *Ye Hongsheng lun jian* 《葉洪生論劍》 [Ye Hongsheng on martial arts fiction] (Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1994). For encyclopedic works on martial arts fiction, see Hu Wenbin 胡文彬, ed., *Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo ci dian* 《中國武俠小說辭典》 [Encyclopedia of Chinese martial arts fiction] (Shijiazhuang: Huashan wenyi chubanshe, 1992); Ning, Zongyi 寧宗一, compiled, *Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo jian shang ci dian* 《中國武俠小說鑒賞辭典》 [A comprehensive dictionary of Chinese martial arts fiction] (Beijing: Guoji wenhua chuban gongsi, 1992); Liu Xinfeng 劉新風 and Chen Mo 陳墨, eds, *Zhongguo xian dai wu xia xiao shuo jian shang ci dian* 《中國現代武俠小說鑑賞辭典》 [Encyclopedia of contemporary Chinese martial arts fiction appreciation] (Beijing: Zhongyang minzu xueyuan chubanshe, 1993); Xiao Zhizun 蕭之尊, Dai Yijun 戴翼軍, and Chen Erxun 陳爾訓, compiled, *Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo da guan* 《中國武俠小說大觀》 [An encyclopedic study of Chinese martial arts fiction] (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 1993); and Wen Zijian 溫子建, compiled, *Wu xia xiao shuo jian shang da dian* 《武俠小說鑒賞大典》 [An encyclopedic dictionary of martial arts fiction] (Guangxi: Lijiang chubanshe, 1994). Magazines with special issues on martial arts fiction include 'Wu xia xiao shuo zhuan ji 武俠小說專輯 [Special collection on martial arts fiction]', *Unitas* 《聯合文學》, 2.11 (1986), 6-35, 'Wu xia xiao shuo xing sui xin tan 武俠小說興衰新探 [The rise and decline of martial arts fiction revisited]', *Ming Pao Monthly* 《明報月刊》, February 1996, 9-30, and Liu Ching-Chih, ed., *The Question of Reception: Martial Arts Fiction in English*. No. 1 Monograph Series, Centre for Literature and Translation, Lingnan College (Hong Kong: Centre for Literature and Translation, Lingnan College, 1997), which also appeared as *The Question of Reception: Martial Arts Fiction in English*. Special Issue. *Translation Quarterly*, 5-6 (1997), published by the Hong Kong Translation Society.

traditional Chinese fiction, literary cousin of the *wuxia* fiction. Chivalric tales in the classical language embodies the earliest fictionalized accounts of knight-errantry, glamorizing historical or fictitious chivalrous personages by employing special narrative techniques and linguistic elegance, and by developing vivid characterization. Later on, the fiction of knight-errantry bifurcated into written classical tales and oral stories. Professional storytellers of the Song dynasty (960-1279) fascinated their audiences with accounts of heroic swordsmen and swordswomen. The successive dynasties of the Yuan (1280-1368), Ming (1368-1644), and Qing (1644-1911) witnessed the emergence and florescence of vernacular fiction, a popular theme of which was the celebration of buoyant, chivalrous heroism.

Classical tales, oral stories, and vernacular romances were the literary predecessors of *wuxia* fiction, while *wuxia* fiction proper was a later arrival on the Chinese literary scene, appearing only toward the turn of the present century. Earlier works of this genre were wedded to the conventions of chivalric tales and detective fiction. A chivalry-cum-detection novel would tell the story of a group of brave loyal, and honorable knights-errant protecting an upright official and assisting him in the elimination, capture, or incarceration of villains, be they usurious princes, corrupt officials, or bullying, local ruffians. Later on, the adventurous element found in such works was transformed into the fantastic, and the resultant new form evolved into what now called *wuxia* fiction. A typical *wuxia* novel tends to extol miraculous physical feats by exaggerating the prowess of its heroes and villains and enhancing the efficacy of their weaponry and fighting skills. Narrative focus shifts chivalry to methods of fighting and physical culture, and, as a result, *wuxia* fiction suffers as a whole in that its overconcern with a special type of human activity inevitably leads to the neglect or stereotyped representation of human interests and passions and to the gradual erosion of aesthetic concerns. Thus, a preoccupation with martial arts is at once the principal generic feature of *wuxia* fiction and the main cause for its failure to attain the status of serious literature.⁴⁶

Here, Wu seems to be suggesting that martial arts fiction's primary concern with martial arts has been detrimental to its literary qualities, thus preventing it from attaining the status of serious literature. Wu may also be attributing this gradual erosion of aesthetic concerns to the lack of innovation from martial arts fiction writers, as she remarks:

As a rule, *wuxia* fiction writers tend to resort to the wholesale invention of a fantastic character in their treatment of the conventional and obligatory duels -- at the expense of other concerns. Their works read like a collection of entertaining yarns, and the description of exciting contests of physical strength and dexterity appears the *sine qua non* of their work.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Hua Laura Wu, pp. 144-45.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 145.

In his review article on *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (1996), Chard captures succinctly the present state of martial arts fiction. After pointing out that martial arts fiction has been 'a neglected area of modern Chinese fiction', Chard observes that:

The martial arts genre has been prominent in Chinese popular culture throughout the twentieth century, not just in novel form, but also in film, television, comic books, and advertising art. But despite its mass popularity in China, the *wuxia* novel has received little attention in the West. One exception is James J.Y. Liu's classic book, *The Chinese Knight-errant* (London: 1967), which traces the chivalrous warrior (*xia*) and related themes in poetry, fiction, and history writing through the ages, and includes a limited discussion of Republican *wuxia* novels. Numerous other studies, some of them excellent, have recently been published in China.

The martial arts novel comprises a strand of modern Chinese literature separate from the output of the May Fourth writers, one of which began as direct continuation of traditional vernacular fiction. It reached a peak in the 1930s and 1940s, only to end in 1949 when the Communist government imposed a ban on all such literature. But a new wave of writers soon arose in Hong Kong and Taiwan, who brought the genre to new heights of popularity throughout the Chinese world, including, eventually, the Mainland, when the ban was gradually relaxed during the 1980s.⁴⁸

In his review article on *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* in *Contact* (1996), Adrian Hsia laments that 'literary critics and historians will have a hard time assigning a proper place to Jin Yong. The problem is not his craftsmanship, but the genre he chooses as his medium.'⁴⁹ He reminds us that:

Wuxia xiaoshuo is still considered trivial literature. There is not even a suitable Western translation. Sometimes it is rendered as a novel of chivalry, but the Chinese heroes are not noble-born knights. Normally they are base-born persons who excel in martial skills and are fiercely loyal to their own people; but they can

⁴⁸ Robert Chard, review, 'Jin Yong: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*. (Translated by Olivia Mok)', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 59.3 (1996), 606-07 (p. 606).

⁴⁹ Adrian Hsia, review, 'Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain. Jin Yong. Translated by Olivia Mok', *Contact*, October 1996, p. 36.

also be eccentrics and social outcasts. Robin Hood could be the European counterpart of one type of these *wuxia* heroes.

It is up to the author to invent their martial accomplishments which are extraordinary or near-miraculous, but they are never represented as supernatural feats (there is another sub-genre for these kinds of novels). Movements are given fancy names and fighting scenes are described with relish. The people of the martial world, which runs parallel to mainstream society, fight and kill each other for greed, fame, revenge, jealousy or just for the sake of fighting.⁵⁰

Chang Tsong-zung 張頌仁 draws an analogy between martial arts fiction and science fiction in the West, pointing out that 'the closest equivalent imaginative literature in the West is probably science fiction. In both genres, the order of the world is idealized, and action is rarefied by the characters' superhuman abilities. But, while science fiction looks forward to a never-never land of the future, *wu xia* fiction sets its utopia in the past.'⁵¹ Like popular genres in the West,⁵² martial arts fiction as popular literature also features its own formulaic elements. Tang Wenbiao 唐文標 was able to detect certain formulaic elements of martial arts fiction through analysing the structure of Huanzhulouzhuzhu's masterpiece *Shu shan* 《蜀山》 [Sichuan mountains], thus leading him to formulate some guidelines for penning a martial arts novel.⁵³

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Chang Tsong-zung, 'Martial-arts Fiction Keeps the Past Alive', p. 40.

⁵² For details on genres and formula literature in the West, see John G. Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), pp. 5-36; Betty Rosenberg, *Genreflecting: A Guide to Reading Interests in Genre Fiction* (Littleton, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, 1986), Jerry Palmer, *Potboilers (Methods, Concepts and Case Studies in Popular Fiction)* (London & New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 112-27; and Arthur Asa Berger, *Popular Culture Genres. Theories and Texts* (Newbury Park, London & New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1992).

⁵³ Tang Wenbiao 唐文標, 'Jie pou *Shu shan* -- jiao ni zen yang xie jian xia xiao shuo 解剖《蜀山》--教你怎樣寫劍俠小說 [Analysing *Shu shan* -- teaching you how to write swordsman fiction]', in *Qing cheng shi jiu xia* 《青城十九俠》 [Nineteen knights-errant of the Green Mountain], by Huanzhulouzhuzhu 還珠樓主, ed. by Ye Hongsheng 葉洪生 (Taipei: Lianjing chubanshiye gongsi, 1985), pp. 133-46.

Chapter Four

Martial Arts Fiction: History, Translation and Migration

History of Martial Arts Fiction

Although the earliest prototypes of martial arts fiction can be traced to a fictionalized account of knights-errant in history in the story of 'Prince Tan of Yan' (燕丹子) in the Han Dynasty and to stories of Li Ji 李寄 in *Sou shen ji* 《搜神記》 [Searching for the spirits], Zhou Chu 周處 in *Shi shuo xin yu* 《世說新語》 [New tales of the world], or to the story 'Sword of the Yue Maiden' (越女劍) in the *Annals of the Kingdoms of Wu and Yue* 《吳越春秋》 in the Wei-Jin periods, tales of chivalry only flourished for the first time towards the end of the ninth century. These tales of chivalry existed in two literary forms-- tales of chivalrous swordsmen and swordswomen possessing supernatural powers appeared in the Tang *zhuanqi* 傳奇 in literary prose, intended for the elite literati; while texts of chivalric tales and ballads which existed in an oral tradition, intended for the populace, were recorded in colloquial or semi-colloquial prose, interspersed with doggerel verse. James J.Y. Liu reminds us that tales of chivalry, which may draw from historical materials, imbued with supernatural powers, do differ from popularizations of history such as the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and from tales of supernatural events such as the *Journey to the West*, known also as the *Monkey*, remarking:

In short, chivalric tales occupy an intermediate position between popularizations of history on the one hand and tales of the miraculous on the other. They dwell in a twilight region where fact mingles with fancy and the commonplace with the marvelous.¹

Liu seems to suggest that the reader's fascination with tales of chivalry could be attributed to the manner in which writers weave history and the supernatural in such tales, as:

A writer may describe the superhuman powers of a knight in the same matter-of-fact way that he describes, say, the interior of a house, without any apparent feeling of

¹ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 82.

incongruity. This naivety, genuine or assumed, often has a disarming effect on the reader and induces a "willing suspension of disbelief".²

This blending of history and superhuman abilities of a knight-errant protagonist in tales of chivalry has continued well into the present century. A good example can be found in Huanzhulouzhu's 還珠樓主 *Shu Shan* 《蜀山》 series. Liu has not explained why tales of chivalry compounded of such ingredients could still appeal to the minds of modern Chinese. One could perhaps draw some inferences from Ma Yau-woon's views regarding the employment and acceptability of the supernatural in Chinese historical novels as laid out in his "The Chinese Historical Novel: An Outline of Themes and Contexts" (1975). Ma believes that 'the acceptability of the supernatural in a certain novel is closely related to the acceptability of that novel as historical fiction.'³ According to Ma Yau-woon, popular religious concepts, particularly those bordering on a folk nature, have been often exploited by the historical novelists:

Since these concepts have long acquired a canonical strength and these characters (such as the Jade Emperor and the Eight Immortals) are as versatile as they are unlimited by the element of time, their use gives the novel a means to speculate on the nature of the universe as well as the nature of man.[...] This exploitation of the supernatural may offer the novelist vital persuasive resources capable of reaching a cosmic scope, and this persuasion can be increased if the novelist and his audience believe in what the novelist relates.⁴

There is always room for the supernatural in traditional Chinese novels as in historical novels, owing to the functional value the supernatural brings to the works. Ma argues that:

In this way the supernatural lends weight and authority to the moral teachings as well as to the concept of providential supremacy which most historical novelists are so keen to elaborate. Therefore not only in a well-ordered novel may there be room for

² Ibid.

³ Ma Yau-woon, 'The Chinese Historical Novel: An Outline of Themes and Contexts', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 34. 2 (1975), 277-93 (p. 290).

⁴ Ibid.

the supernatural, but even in a less successful work the otherwise depreciatory uses of the unearthly may not be entirely depreciatory in effect.⁵

One can argue that martial arts fiction writers, from the time of producing prototypes of martial arts fiction way back in the Tang Dynasty up until the time of turning out martial arts fiction proper during the early Republican years in this century, must have also found a useful literary apparatus in the supernatural.

James J.Y. Liu attributes the growth of chivalric tales of the Tang period to the following factors: firstly, the political and social chaos created by military governors fighting and intriguing against each other while oppressing the masses led writers and readers to project their hopes on knights-errant who would be able to help them to redress the wrongs; secondly, current Buddhist tales fired the imagination of writers for inclusion of exotic ingredients in their works; and thirdly, the revival of 'ancient prose' provided writers with a convenient medium for vivid elaboration of their stories.⁶ Twenty-four chivalric tales of the Tang period written in literary prose, of different length, are found in *Tai ping guang ji* 《太平廣記》 [Extensive records of the grand tranquility reign].⁷

Although chivalric tales continued to be written in literary prose in the Song Dynasty or thereafter, no works ever surpassed their Tang predecessors. The Song Dynasty saw further development of chivalric tales written in vernacular prose, which appeared as *huaben* 話本 stories, heavily influenced by the Tang *chuanji* 傳奇 tales, with some

⁵ Ibid., p. 291.

⁶ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 86.

⁷ English synopses of Du Guangting's 杜光庭 'Qiu ran ke zhuan' 虬髯客傳 [The curly-bearded stranger], Yuan Jiao's 袁郊 'Hongxian' 紅線 [Hongxian the maid], Pei Xing's 裴鉞 'Kun lun nu' 昆崙奴 [The Kunlun slave] and 'Nie yin niang' 聶隱娘 [Nie Yinniang the kidnapped daughter], Duan Chengshi's 段成式 'Jing xi dian lao ren' 京西店老人 [The old man at the inn] and 'Lanling lou ren' 蘭陵老人 [The old man of Lanling], Huangfu Shi's 皇甫氏 'Yi xia' 義俠 [The just swordsman] and 'Cui shen si' 崔慎思 [Cui Shensi's wife] as collected in *Yuan hua ji* 《原化記》 [Metamorphoses], and Huangfu Mei's 皇甫枚 'Li gui shou' 李龜壽 [Li Guishou] are found in James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, pp. 87-99.

knights-errant and plot-outlines reworked into the *huaben* literature. These stories of knights-errant found in the prompt-books used by professional story-tellers in the Song period, in turn, came to influence martial arts fiction writing in later periods. Ma Yau-woon points out in his "The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* Stories" (1975) that 'the study of the Chinese knight-errant in fiction cannot be completed without paying due attention to *hua-pen* stories.'⁸ He reminds us that the significance of *huaben* literature lies in the fact that:

In terms of quantity, it provides a large number of divergent stories on the Chinese knight-errant.[...] Furthermore, if one intends to survey the chivalric stories enjoyed by the urban public of Sung [Song] China, the first period for which we have concrete evidence of professional storytelling activities, *hua-pen* [*huaben*] literature, pending the discovery of any as yet unknown material, provides some of the most likely representations.⁹

Popular *huaben* stories featuring knights-errant can be found in the *san yan er pai*¹⁰ 三言二拍 collections, *Gu jin xiao shuo* 《古今小說》 [Stories old and new], and *Qing ping shan tang hua ben* 《清平山堂話本》 [*Huaben* stories of Qing ping shan tang]. Ma Yau-woon singled out the following as stories on knights-errant in the *huaben* literature: 'Zhao tai zu qian li song Jingniang 趙太祖千里送京娘' [The Song founder escorts Jingniang], 'Linan li Qian po liu fa ji 臨安里錢婆留發跡' [The prosperity of Qian Miao], 'Shi Hongzhao long hu jun chen hui 史弘肇龍虎君臣會' [Shi Hongchao and the union of emperors and ministers], 'Zheng jie shi li gong shen bei gong 鄭節使立功神臂弓' [Governor Zheng accomplishes a great service with a mighty bow], 'Li Qian gong qiong di yu xia ke 李汧公窮邸遇俠客' [Li, Duke of Qian, in straits meets a knight-errant], 'Cheng Yuanyu dian si dai

⁸ Ma Yau-woon, 'The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* Stories', p. 268.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 267-68.

¹⁰ *San yan er pai* 三言二拍 is a name which refers to five collections of colloquial tales, with the *san yan* 三言 collection comprising *Yu shi ming yan* 《喻世明言》 [Bright words to edify the world], *Jing shi tong yan* 《警世通言》 [Penetrating words to advise the world], and *Xing shi heng yan* 《醒世恆言》 [Everlasting words to advise the world], all edited by Feng Menglong 馮夢龍, while the *er pai* 二拍 collection comprising *Chu ke pai an jing qi* 《初刻拍案驚奇》 [Amazing stories] and *Er ke pai an jing qi* 《二刻拍案驚奇》 [Amazing stories, second series], both edited by Ling Mengchu 凌濛初.

chang qian / Shi yi niang yun gang zong tan xia 程元玉店肆代價錢/十一娘雲崗縱譚俠'
[Lady Wei], 'Wu jiang jun yi fan bi chou / Chen da lang san ren zhong hui 烏將軍一飯必
酬/陳大郎三人重會' [The grateful chieftain Wu], 'Liu Dongshan kua ji Shuncheng men /
shi ba xiong qi zong cun jiu si 劉東山誇技順城門/十八兄奇蹤村酒肆' [Liu Dongshan
the braggart], 'Shen tou ji xing yi zhi mei / xia dao guan xing san mei xi 神偷寄興一枝梅/
俠盜慣行三昧戲' [The lazy dragon], 'Yang Qianzi ke fang yu xia zeng 楊謙之客舫遇俠僧'
[Yang Qianzhi meets a chivalric monk on a boat], and 'Yang Wen lan lu hu zhuan 楊溫攔
路虎傳' [Yang Wen, the road-blocking tiger].¹¹ Ye Hongsheng 葉洪生 traces vernacular
martial arts fiction to some of the *huaben* stories, what he considered to be the *shuo gongan*
說公案 [public cases] type of *xiaoshuo* current in the Southern Song Dynasty.¹²

In the course of time, orally told chivalric tales which evolved around a cycle of adventure stories of certain groups of heroes came to be joined together, giving birth eventually to full-length prose romances. *Shui hu zhuan* 《水滸傳》, allegedly co-authored by Shi Nai'an 施耐庵 and Luo Guanzhong 羅貫中, known to the West as *The Water Margin* or *All Men are Brothers*, is a notable example of chivalric romance that evolved in this manner. James J.Y. Liu was careful to point out though:

In fact, not all the heroes in the romance exhibit the spirit of true knight-errantry, though the authors are at pains to show that most of them are forced to turn rebels by gross injustice. Moreover, the band as a whole behave on principles consistent with knight-errantry. Their slogan is, "Practise the Way on behalf of Heaven", and they habitually rob the rich and the help the poor.¹³

James J.Y. Liu offers an explanation for the change in writers' attitudes in their depiction of knight-errantry in *The Water Margin*, in *Shui hu hou zhuan* 《水滸後傳》 [Later history of

¹¹ For details on some of the stories, see Ma Yau-woon, 'The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* Stories', pp. 269-92.

¹² Ye Hongsheng, 葉洪生, 'Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo shi lun 中國武俠小說史論 [On the history of Chinese martial arts fiction]', in *Ye Hongsheng lun jian* 《葉洪生論劍》 [Ye Hongsheng on martial arts fiction] (Taipei: Lianjing chubun shiye gongsi, 1994), pp. 3-110 (p. 21).

¹³ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 113.

the Water Margin] by Chen Chen 陳忱 (c. 1590-1670), and in *Jie shui hu zhuan* 《結水滸傳》 [Conclusion to the Water Margin], known also as *Dang kou zhi* 《蕩寇志》 [Account of the suppression of bandits] by Yu Wanchun 俞萬春 (ob. 1849), remarking that:

On the whole, the earlier writers, such as those responsible for *Water Margin* and Ch'en [Chen], expressed the wish of the people for knights-errant to uphold justice and to repel foreign invaders, while the later writers like Yu reveal the mentality of those who had accepted the rule of the Manchus and were on the side of law and order. This change may have also been due in part to the rise of professional armed escorts in real life.¹⁴

Liu points out that 'in spite of their changed role, the knights-errant in these tales remain true to most of the ideals of knight-errantry: they are brave, loyal, and honourable; they would only support an honest official and would always help the poor and oppressed.'¹⁵ The support that knights-errant rendered to honest officials to fight injustice and to help the needy developed into a major feature in the *gongan* 公案 stories [public cases] in the Qing Dynasty when China came under the foreign rule of the Manchu, a nomadic tribe from the north.

Although novels on knights-errant continued to be written after the Song period, major works only re-appeared in the Qing Dynasty.¹⁶ The *gongan* 公案 subgenre of Chinese fiction evolved in the Qing Dynasty, the most influential and widely read at the time, an

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 117.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ James J.Y. Liu classified stories on knights-errant produced between 1644 and the present, more accurately the pre-World War II period, into four groups: (1) chivalric-tales-cum-detective stories, representative works are the *San xia wu yi* 《三俠五義》 [The three knights-errant and the five altruists], *Shi gong an* 《施公案》 [The public cases of Lord Shi], and *Peng gong an* 《彭公案》 [The public cases of Lord Peng]; (2) romances combining chivalry with love, representative works are *Hao qiu zhuan* 《好逑傳》 [The fortunate union], known also as *Xia yi feng yue zhuan* 《俠義風月傳》 [A chivalrous love], and *Er nu ying xiong zhuan* 《兒女英雄傳》 [A tale of heroic love]; (3) tales of flying swordsmen, representative works are *Qi jian shi san xia* 《七劍十三俠》 [The seven swordsmen and the thirteen knights-errant] and *Shu shan jian xia* 《蜀山劍俠》 [The chivalrous swordsmen of the Sichuan mountains]; and (4) tales emphasizing physical feats, representative works are *Xia yi ying xiong zhuan* 《俠義英雄傳》 [Chronicles of chivalrous and altruistic heroes] and *Jiang hu qi xia zhuan* 《江湖奇俠傳》 [Chronicles of the strange roving knights], also known as *Huo shao hong lian si* 《火燒紅蓮寺》 [The burning of the Red Lotus Monastery]. In *The Chinese Knight-errant*, pp. 116-37.

important form after the *The Water Margin* which influenced future development of martial arts fiction proper in this century. One could perhaps be reminded that Ma Yau-woon traces the forerunners of contemporary martial arts fiction to the *gongan* series.¹⁷ Famous *gongan* novel *San xia wu yi* 《三俠五義》 [The three knights-errant and the five altruists] by Shi Yuqun 石玉昆 (later retitled as *Qi xia wu yi* 《七俠五義》 [The seven knights-errant and the five altruists]) evolves around a cycle of adventures by the wise magistrate or judge Bao Zheng 包拯, commonly known as Baogong 包公, meaning Lord Bao, and his assistants, knights-errants and real heroes of the novel who render their service to the sovereign in their endeavours to help the needy and to redress wrongs. True knight-errantry is depicted in these stories. On knight-errantry and the use of magic powers found in the Song stories, James Liu comments as follows:

The Three Knights-errant and the Five Altruists keeps to the main tradition of chivalry in spirit. It emphasizes the altruism of the heroes, their sympathy for the poor and oppressed, and their hatred for corrupt and cruel officials. On the whole, it avoids the supernatural. Such supernatural elements as there are concern Lord Pao [Bao], but not the knights-errant, none of whom possesses magic powers.¹⁸

Besides Ma Yau-woon's scholarly work *The Pao-kung Tradition in Chinese Popular Literature* (1971), other scholarly works on the Baogong tradition have been brought out in Germany and in Italy.¹⁹ Other major *gongan* novels include *Shi gong an* 《施公案》

¹⁷ Ma Yau-woon, *The Pao-Kung Tradition in Chinese Popular Literature*, p. 11. It would appear that Ma traces the forerunners of contemporary martial arts fiction to the second type of the two totally different types of *gongan* fiction which evolved in the second half of the Qing dynasty, see his 'Kung-an Fiction'. According to Ma, the second type consists of 'popular novels with heavy chivalric interests but labeled as of the *kung-an* [*gongan*] tradition' (p. 253) and 'has their claim based on contents and formalistic similarities with the traditional form' (p. 255). He sums up the situation as 'the division into two types of *kung-an* novel in the Ch'ing period, with one of them adopting the classic crime-centered approach in competition with the much more popular type heavily capitalizing on the prodigious feats of arms is another form of rejuvenation' (p. 258).

¹⁸ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 120.

¹⁹ Other scholarly works on the Baogong tradition include Robert Blader's *A Critical Study of 'San-hsia wu-yi' and relationship to the 'Lung-tu kung-an' Song-Book* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1977); George A. Hayden's *The Judge Pao Plays of the Yuan Dynasty* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1981); Sabine Schommer, *Richter Bao, der chinesische Sherlock Holmes: eine Untersuchung der Sammlung von Kriminalfällen Bao Gong'an* (Bochum: Brochmeyer, 1994); Bernd Schmolter, *Bao Zheng (999-1062) als Beamter und Staatsmann: das historische Vorbild des "weisen*

[Public cases of Lord Shi] and *Peng gong an* 《彭公案》 [Public cases of Lord Peng].

James Liu seems to be puzzled by the popularity enjoyed by these two works:

Neither of these works has much merit: there is no plot to speak of, the characters are stereotyped, and the language is crude. Yet both have achieved great popularity, so much so that many sequels have been published. (The first edition of each work contained about 100 chapters, but current editions run to 528 and 187 chapters respectively, though some chapters are extremely brief.) Such seems to be the insatiable demand of readers for this kind of fiction.²⁰

Ma Yau-woon seems to be able to placate Liu's bewilderment as he discovers distinct merits in these two works, arguing that:

What makes the *Shih-kung an* [*Shi gong an*] series and the *Peng-kung an* [*Peng gong an*] series distinct from the regular pattern of *kung-an* [*gongan*] literature is not their length and form, but their lack of interest in legal cases and legal settlements. The primary concern in these novels is to exploit the "loyal and good" elements of the secret societies to surpress these organizations and other localized powers with illegitimate [illegitimate] military strength.²¹

Regarding the *San xia wu yi* 《三俠五義》 [Three knights-errant and five altruists], particularly its own sequences, the *Xiao wu yi* 《小五義》 [The five junior altruists] and the *Xu xiao wu yi* 《續小五義》 [The five junior altruists, continued], Ma points out that they are also centered around 'the efforts of the knights-errant who adhered directly or indirectly to Pao-kung to crush the illegitimate [illegitimate] power of a rebellious prince.'²² Zhang Huoqing 張火慶 detects in the stories on Magistrate Bao and his knight-errant assistants in

Richters" der Volksliteratur (Bochum: Studienverlag Brockmeyer, 1982); Osvaldo Carloni, *Il magistrato Bao Gong ed il "longtu gong'an": una raccolta di novelle poliziesche dell'epoca Ming* (Napoli: Istituto universitario orientale, 1990); and Zhang Huoqing 張火慶, 'Bao gong yu qi xia wu yi 包公與七俠五義 [Lord Bao and the seven knights-errant and five altruists]', in *Zhongguo xiao shuo shi lun cong* 《中國小說史論 叢》 [Collected essays on the history of Chinese fiction], co-authored by Gong Pengcheng 龔鵬程 and Zhang Huoqing 張火慶 (Taipei: Xuesheng shudian, 1984), pp. 307-24.

²⁰ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 121.

²¹ Ma Yau-woon, *The Pao-Kung Tradition in Chinese Popular Literature*, p. 11.

²² Ibid.

the *Qi xia wu yi* 《七俠五義》 [Seven knights-errant and five altruists] a sublimation of the former individualistic deeds of knights-errantry into group loyalty and comradeship²³, as in *The Water Margin*. Leon Comber translated six cases of Judge Bao, out of one hundred contained in the Ming work *Long tu gong an* 《龍圖公案》 [Public cases of Judge Bao], into *The Strange Cases of Magistrate Pao* (1964),²⁴ which, according to Everett F. Bleiler, "are admittedly spiced up to make them more appealing to the Western market."²⁵ In the West, Polish sinologist Tadeusz Zbikowski translated twenty stories featuring Magistrate Bao, taken from the 17th century collection entitled *Long tu gong an* 《龍圖公案》 [Public cases of Judge Bao], into *Sprawiedliwe wyroki sedziego Pao-Kunga* (Warsaw, 1960), which Bleiler claimed to be the largest selection of Baogong's cases available in a Western language in 1978.²⁶ Yin-lien C. Chin, Yetta S. Center, and Mildred Ross also brought out their translation "*The Stone Lion*" and *Other Chinese Detective Stories: the Wisdom of Lord Bau* (1992).²⁷ The Baogong tradition has enjoyed popularity to this day as TV series and movies on Judge Bao continued to be produced in both Hong Kong and Taiwan in recent years.

Robert Hans van Gulik (1910-1967), influenced by the *gongan* 公案 [public cases] genre, brought out his own Judge Dee series in English after producing an unabridged and corrected translation of the eighteenth century authentic Chinese detective stories *Dee goong an* 《狄公案》, based on the stories of a fictitious character Di Renjie 狄仁傑 (629-700) of the Tang Dynasty, into the *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee* in 1949. Van Gulik's

²³ Zhang Huoqing 張火慶, 'Bao gong yu qi xia wu yi 包公與七俠五義 [Lord Bao and the seven knights-errant and five altruists]', p. 309.

²⁴ Leon Comber, trans. *The Strange Cases of Magistrate Pao* (Tokyo and Rutland, VT.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1964).

²⁵ This comment follows the bibliographical entry *The Strange Cases of Magistrate Pao, Chinese Tales of Crime and Detection* in Bleiler, p.345.

²⁶ Everett F. Bleiler, 'Chinese Detectives in Poland', *Armchair Detective*, 11 (1978), 343-45 (p.343).

²⁷ Yin-lien C. Chin, Yetta S. Center, and Mildred Ross, trans. "*The Stone Lion*" and *Other Chinese Detective Stories: the Wisdom of Lord Bau* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1992).

Judge Dee series may serve to illustrate the translational migrations of the *gongan* 公案 [public cases] stories, forerunners of contemporary martial arts fiction, across different national, linguistic, and cultural boundaries. The *Bibliography of Dr. R.H. van Gulik* (1970) shows that the Judge Dee series, all suggested by Chinese plots, were written originally in English by van Gulik the Dutch diplomat between 1949 and 1967 and that these detective stories were translated into Japanese, Chinese, Dutch, German, French, Spanish, Swedish, and Finnish between 1950 and 1965.²⁸ *The Chinese Maze Murders* was first translated into Japanese in 1950, then into Chinese by van Gulik himself in 1953. Judge Dee novels *The Chinese Bell Murders* (1949), *The Chinese Maze Murders* (1950), *The Chinese Lake Murders* (1952), *The Chinese Gold Murder* (1956), *The Chinese Nail Murders* (1958), *The Lacquer Screen* (1958), *The Haunted Monastery* (1958-59), *The Red Pavilion* (1959), *The Emperor's Pearl* (1960), *Murder in Canton* (1961-62), and *The Willow Pattern* (1963), plus Judge Dee short stories *Murder on New Year's Eve* (1958), *The Coffins of the Emperor* (1959), *Zes Zaken Voor Rechter Tie* (six Judge Dee short stories originally written in English) (1959-61), *Five Auspicious Clouds* (1961), *The Night of the Tiger* (1963), *The Morning of the Monkey* (1963) were translated into other European languages after 1956. An on-line catalogue search shows that van Gulik's *The Chinese Maze Murders* (1950) was

²⁸ A list of Judge Dee stories translated into other languages between 1950-1965 can be compiled from Robert Hans van Gulik, *Bibliography of Dr. R.H. van Gulik* (Boston: Boston University, 1970), pp. 49-62. *Dee goong an* (1949) was translated into German in 1960. *The Chinese Bell Murders* (1949) was translated into Japanese in 1955; into Dutch in 1958; into Swedish in 1960; into French in 1962; and into German in 1964. *The Chinese Maze Murders* (1950) was translated into Japanese in 1950; into Chinese, by van Gulik himself, in 1953; into Dutch in 1956; and into German in 1963. *The Chinese Lake Murders* (1952) was translated into Dutch in 1959; into Swedish in 1963; and into French in 1963. *The Chinese Gold Murders* (1956) was translated into Dutch in 1958; into Swedish in 1960; into Spanish in 1965; and into Japanese in 1965. *The Chinese Nail Murders* (1958) was translated into Dutch in 1960. *The Lacquer Screen* (1958) was translated into Dutch in 1962. *The Haunted Monastery* (1958-59) was translated into Dutch in 1962 and into French in 1963. *The Red Pavilion* (1959) was translated into Dutch in 1961. *The Emperor's Pearl* (1960) was translated into Dutch in 1963; into Swedish in 1964; and into Finnish in 1964. *Murder in Canton* (1961-62) was translated into Dutch in 1964. *The Willow Pattern* (1963) was translated into Dutch in 1964. Judge Dee short stories, written originally in English, which were translated into other languages include: *Murder on New Year's Eve* (1958) into Dutch in 1958, *The Coffins of the Emperor* (1959) into Dutch in 1959, six cases of Judge Dee produced in 1959-61 translated into *Zes Zaken Voor Rechter Tie* (1959-61), *Five Auspicious Clouds* (1961) into Dutch in 1962, *The Night of the Tiger* (1963) into Dutch in 1963 and into French in 1964, and *The Morning of the Monkey* (1963) into Dutch in 1964. Other Judge Dee stories which remained untranslated, as recorded in the *Bibliography of Dr. R.H. van Gulik* (1970) include: *The Phantom of the Temple* (1965), *Necklace and Calabash* (1966), *Poets and Murder* (1967), *The Monkey and the Tiger* (1963), and *Judge Dee at Work* (1958-61).

translated into Indonesian in 1962, *The Phantom of the Temple* (1965) into Vietnamese in 1969, *The Chinese Bell Murders* (1949) into Vietnamese in 1994, *The Chinese Nail Murders* (1958) into Hebrew in 1992, and three re-titled works into Chinese after the re-opening of China.²⁹

Two other major works that influenced contemporary martial arts fiction are *Hao qiu zhuan* 《好逑傳》 [The fortunate union], known also as *Xia yi feng yue zhuan* 《俠義風月傳》 [A tale of chivalrous love] by Mingjiaozhongren 名教中人 and *Er nu ying xiong zhuan* 《兒女英雄傳》 [A tale of heroic lovers], originally known as *Jin yu yuan* 《金玉緣》 [Chronicles of Jin and Yu] by Wen Kang 文康, a Manchu official, both are romances combining chivalry with love. The first work *Hao qiu zhuan* 《好逑傳》 [The fortunate union], the love story between a chivalrous young man endowed with great physical strength and literary talent and a virtuous young lady of unsurpassing beauty and intelligence, has been translated many times into European languages. James J.Y. Liu explores this translational phenomenon:

This mediocre work is neither highly esteemed nor widely read in China now, though it has been translated many times into Western languages. As far back as the early eighteenth century, one James Wilkinson translated the first three parts of the romance into English and the last part into Portuguese. Then, Bishop Percy, the editor of *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, turned the last part from Portuguese into English, edited the whole of Wilkinson's manuscript, and had it published under the title, *Hau Kiou Choaan, or the Pleasing History*, in 1761. Since then, more than a dozen versions in English, French, German have appeared, some translated from the Chinese others re-translated from other European languages. The latest English adaptation, the *Breeze in the Moonlight* (1926) by H. Bedford-Jones, is based on the French translation, *La brise au clair de lune* (1925), by George Soulié de Morant. That this second-rate work should have achieved such popularity in the West is perhaps not

²⁹ *The Chinese Maze Murders* in Indonesian (1962), *The Phantom of the Temple* in Vietnamese (1969), and *The Chinese Bell Murders* in Vietnamese (1994) were found on the on-line catalogue of Cornell University. *The Chinese Nail Murders* in Hebrew (1992) was found at Harvard. Chinese translation *Hei hu li* (1982) was found at Harvard, *Ti kung tuan yu ta kuan* (1986) at Michigan, and *Ta Tang Ti kung chuan chuan* (1993) at Cornell.

really surprising when one remembers the vogue of *chinoiserie* in eighteenth-century Europe.³⁰

The second work *Er nu ying xiong zhuan* 《兒女英雄傳》 [A tale of heroic lovers] is the story of how Thirteenth Sister 十三妹, a remarkable woman full of noble and chivalric virtues, saves the lives of a young man and a young lady in her endeavours to seek revenge for her father. The story ends with Thirteenth Sister and the lady whom she rescued both getting married to the same young man. Franz Kuhn translated this novel into the German *Wen K'ang: Die Schwarze Reiterins* (1954).³¹ This work has also been adapted into operatic forms *Gong yan yuan* 《弓硯緣》 [Love encounter of the catapult and the inkstand] and *Neng ren si* 《能仁寺》 [Nengren Monastery], whose popularity lasts till the present day.

The development of martial arts fiction took on a new dimension during the early Republican years when China witnessed rapid changes in urban centres and growth of rival factions among warlords. The Literary Revolution initiated by a group of young intellectuals in 1917 not only introduced vernacular Chinese as the national medium of communication, but also Western ideas into modern fiction writing.³² Before 1921 in the Republican Era, the Chinese market was flooded with Butterfly fiction of the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School. Besides filling an escapist function among urban dwellers caught in a rapid change in a "modernizing environment" as claimed by Perry Link,³³ the Butterfly fiction, according to Leo Ou-fan Lee, also testified to the strongly felt need to

³⁰ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 124.

³¹ Franz Kuhn, trans., *Wen K'ang: Die Schwarze Reiterin* (Zurich: Manesse Verlag, 1954).

³² See C.T. Hsia, 'The Literary Revolution', in his *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction 1917-1957* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), pp. 3-27; Chow Tse-tung, 'The Literary Revolution', in his *The May Fourth Movement. Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), pp. 269-88; and Leo Ou-fan Lee, 'Literary Trends I: The Quest for Modernity, 1895-1927', in *Cambridge History of China 12*, ed. by John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 452-64.

³³ Perry Link, 'Traditional-Style Popular Urban Fiction in the Teens and Twenties', in *Modern Chinese Literature*, ed. by Merle Goldman (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 327-49 (p. 330).

create a different type of popular literature.³⁴ Martial arts fiction, included under Butterfly fiction, began to claim an existence of its own, for the market was soon swarmed with martial arts fiction written mostly by novelists from the south, with Shanghai as their base.

According to Perry Link, martial arts fiction, what he called "knight-errant" novels, constituted the third wave of popularity that hit China during the first decades of the twentieth century, the first being love stories, while the second consisted of three major strands -- satirical "social novels", Western-style detective stories, and "scandal fiction", with the themes of fiction reflecting social issues current in the urban public.³⁵ The third wave of popularity was sparked off by Xiang Kairan's 向愷然 *Jiang hu qi xia zhuan* 《江湖奇俠傳》 [Chronicles of the strange roving knights].³⁶ This novel and its imitation reached a peak of popularity from 1927 to 1930, at a time when public imagination was gripped by the Northern Expedition's struggle against warlordism, following the troubles with Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 and general disillusionment with the revolution.³⁷ Besides its escapist functions, another appeal of martial arts fiction may be connected with the element of "remedial protest" found in the genre, a protest against abusers of power, on behalf of the abused, whose expression in fiction 'was not only natural but also quite probably necessary for the stability of the social order', as Link observed.³⁸ He added that 'modern martial arts fiction continued to attack abusive members of society's elite in the style of past traditions.'³⁹

³⁴ Leo Ou-fan Lee, 'Literary Trends I: the Quest for Modernity, 1895-1927', p. 464.

³⁵ Link, 'Traditional-Style Popular Urban Fiction in the Teens and Twenties', pp. 332-33.

³⁶ Link mentions how this knight-errant story inspired a peak of popularity during 1927-30, in *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, p. 22.

³⁷ Link, 'Traditional-Style Popular Urban Fiction in the Teens and Twenties', p. 333.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 340-41.

³⁹ Ibid. 341.

Martial arts fiction writers since the Republican Era are often divided into two groups. Those works produced between 1911-1949 are commonly referred to as the Old School of martial arts novels (*jiupai wuxia xiaoshuo* 舊派武俠小說) while those published after 1949, i.e. after the Communist takeover of China, as the New School of martial arts novels (*xinpai wuxia xiaoshuo* 新派武俠小說). The Old School of martial arts novels is again subdivided into two streams: the Northern Stream (*beipai* 北派)⁴⁰ and the Southern Stream (*nanpai* 南派),⁴¹ depending on the native origins of the writers or where their works were first serialized, using the Yangtze River as a dividing line.

Xiang Kairan 向愷然 (1890-1957), better known by his pen-name Pingjiang Buxiaosheng 平江不肖生, is a leading writer of the Southern Stream. A native of Hunan province, Xiang was educated in Japan. His major work *Jiang hu qi xia zhuan* 《江湖奇俠傳》 [Chronicles of the strange roving knight], a pot-pourri of the martial world concocted of flying swordsmen, magic powers, knights-errant, shamans, running to one hundred and fifty chapters, was adapted into a film *Huo shao hong lian si* 《火燒紅蓮寺》 [The burning of the Red Lotus Monastery], which ran through eighteen series, exerting great influence on other Chinese martial arts fiction. His other major work *Jin dai xia yi ying xiong zhuan* 《近代俠義英雄傳》 [Chronicles of modern knights-errant and altruists], stories of Wang Wu the Broadsword 大刀王五 and Huo Yuanjia the Knight-errant 大俠霍元甲, emphasizing the Chinese national character and chivalric deeds, helped to inspire nationalism at a time when China was riddled by warlordism and foreign aggression. Another master of the Southern Stream is Gu Mingdao 顧明道 (1897-1944), from Jiangsu province. His major work *Huang jiang nu xia* 《荒江女俠》 [The roving lady knight-errant]⁴², first serialized in a Shanghai newspaper in 1928, was adapted into a movie

⁴⁰ See Link, *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, pp. 169-70.

⁴¹ Details on the writers of the Southern Stream can be found in Ye Hongsheng, 葉洪生, 'Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo shi lun 中國武俠小說史論 [On the history of Chinese martial arts fiction]', pp. 28-43.

⁴² Link mentions the success of this knight-errant story in *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, p. 14, 117, 171.

running to thirteen series. His works are imbued with a strong sense of patriotism and national feeling. Other major writers, each with their representative work include Yao Minai 姚民哀 and his *Si hai qun long ji* 《四海群龍記》 [Meeting of the heroes], stories on revolutionary and underground societies; Jiang Xiahun 姜俠魂 and Yang Chenyin 楊塵因 and their co-authored work *Jiang hu er shi si xia* 《江湖二十四俠》 [Twenty-four knights-errant roving the lakes and rivers], stories on anti-Manchu revolutionary activities;⁴³ and Wen Zhigon 文直公 and his *Bi xue dan xin* 《碧血丹心》 [Royal blood and patriotic heart], stories of knights-errant and great national endeavours to save the country.

Zhao Huanting 趙煥亭 (real name Zhao Bachang 趙絨章, 1877-1951) is a representative writer of the Northern Stream. Zhao was a native of Hebei province, whose major work being *Qi xia jing zhong zhuan* 《奇俠精忠傳》 [Chronicles of a strange, loyal knight-errant]. Zhao was the first martial arts novelist who attempted to explore the complex nature of human character, a departure from stereotyped and oversimplified characters found in traditional writings. Besides Zhao Huanting, major writers of the Northern Stream include Huanzhulouzhuzhu 還珠樓主, Wang Dulu 王度盧, Bai Yu 白羽, Zheng Zhengyin 鄭証因, and Zhu Zhenmu 朱貞木, known collectively as the "five major writers of the Northern Stream (*bei pai wu da jia* 北派五大家)". The main contributions of these writers are the distinctive styles and innovations each brought to bear in their works, thus furthering martial arts fiction as a literary genre in the 1930's.⁴⁴ Huanzhulouzhuzhu 還珠樓主 (real name Li Shoumin 李壽民, 1902-1961), a native of Sichuan province, known for his creative imagination, created a world of fantasy, flying swordsmen, and martial arts adventures in his *Shu shan* 《蜀山》 [Sichuan mountains] series, comprising *Shu shan jian*

⁴³ Link's views on anti-Manchu ideas found in popular knight-errant novels are: 'When anti-Manchu ideas were taken very seriously in revolutionary circles before 1911, popular knight-errant novels clothed their account of heroism in anti-Manchu rubrics. That these rubrics were merely stylish is clear from the fact that they survived right through the 1920s and 1930s -- when they no longer had contemporary relevance.' In *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, p. 203.

⁴⁴ Details on the martial arts novelists of the Northern Stream found in *ibid.*, pp. 44-60.

xia zhuan 《蜀山劍俠傳》 [Flying swordsmen of the Sichuan mountains],⁴⁵ *Qing cheng shi jiu xia* 《青城十九俠》 [Nineteen knights-errant of Green mountain], *Liu hu xia yin* 《柳湖俠隱》 [Hermit knights-errant by the willow lake], *E mei qi ai* 《峨眉七矮》 [Seven dwarfs of the Emei mountain], plus other works. His *Shu shan* 《蜀山》 [Sichuan mountain] series describing the fantasy and martial arts adventures in the deep Emei mountain in Sichuan province, first appeared as newspaper serials in Tianjin in 1932. This traditional chapter-divided novel (*zhanghui xiaoshuo* 章回小說), written over a twenty-year period, comprising three hundred twenty-nine *hui* 回 (chapters) of close to five million words, was still considered unfinished when China turned Communist in 1949. Bai Yu 白羽 (real name Gong Baiyu 宮白羽, 1899-1966), a native of Shandong province and a keen observer of human beings, known for his satirical approach to describing social issues in his works, has produced works which include *Shi er jin qian biao* 《十二金錢鏢》 [Twelve golden darts], *Wu lin zheng xiong ji* 《武林爭雄記》 [Scramble of power in the martial world], and *Tou quan* 《偷拳》 [Stealing fisticuffs]. He became famous when his *Shi er jin qian biao* 《十二金錢鏢》 [Twelve golden darts] was first serialized in a newspaper in Tianjin in 1938. This series ran to eighty-one chapters, totalling over one million five hundred thousand words. Zheng Zhengyin 鄭証因 (real name Zheng Rupei 鄭汝霽, 1900-1960), a native of Tianjin city, whose masterpiece *Ying zhua wang* 《鷹爪王》 [The eagle-clawed hero fighter] was first serialized in a pictorial magazine in Tianjin in 1941, was himself an endowed martial artist, conversant in the conduct and practice of underground societies. He was known for introducing different weapons and graphic fighting techniques, as well as slang expressions and jargon of the martial brotherhood into his novels. Wang Dulu 王度盧 (real name Wang Baoxiang 王葆祥, 1909-1977) came from a Manchu family in Beijing. He wrote detective stories before switching to martial arts fiction in 1938. It was his serialized martial arts novel *Bao jian jin chai* 《寶劍金釵》 [Prize sword and golden hairpin] that brought him instant fame. Wang's *He jing kun lun* 《鶴驚崑崙》 [He's revenge on Kunlun] series, comprising the novels *He jing kun lun* 《鶴驚崑崙》 [He's

⁴⁵ Link mentions this knight-errant story in *ibid.*, p. 16.

revenge on Kunlun], *Bao jian jin chai* 《寶劍金釵》 [Prize sword and golden hairpin], *Jian qi zhu guang* 《劍氣珠光》 [Sword and jewel], *Wo hu cang long* 《臥虎藏龍》 [The hidden heroes], and *tie qi yin ping* 《鐵騎銀瓶》 [Romance of Tie and Ping], which revolve around the tragic romances between knights-errant and their damsels, came to one hundred and nine *hui*, totalling two million seven hundred words. Zhu Zhenmu 朱貞木 (real name Zhu Zhenyuan 朱楨元), from Zhejiang province, distinguished himself in creating a weird atmosphere involving fantastic mysteries surrounding historical figures, drawing his materials also from ethnic tribes living in remote border regions. His major works include *Man ku feng yun* 《蠻窟風雲》 [Stories of the border regions], *Luo sha fu ren* 《羅刹夫人》 [Lady Luosha], *Hu xiao long yin* 《虎嘯龍吟》 [Encounter of the tigers and dragons], and *Qi sha bei* 《七殺碑》 [The tablet that registers seven 'kills'].

The Old School of martial arts fiction represented almost a rebellion against the Qing martial arts novels which emphasized the unswerving loyalty knights-errant pledged to the imperial court. Knights-errant in stories written during the early years of the Republican Era disdained to serve the royal family or to work for government officials, uncorrupt though the latter could be, in their fight against outlaws, bandits, evil-doers, corrupt officials or local ruffians. The focus had shifted to the knight-errant's individual vengeance family vendettas, strange encounters, and fantastic adventures, often mingled with the supernatural. Fighting techniques were vividly portrayed. Extremely precise and professional martial arts terms were used in this connection.

Even though martial arts fiction was banned in Communist China in 1949 as it was considered feudal and reactionary,⁴⁶ Hegel points out that remnants of the genre could still be found in the drama, taking on other forms in the Chinese performing arts.⁴⁷ He observes

⁴⁶ Chang Tsong-zung, 'Martial-Arts Fiction Keeps the Past Alive', p. 40.

⁴⁷ Robert Hegel, 'Making the Past Serve the Present in Fiction and Drama: From the Yan'an Forum to the Cultural Revolution', in *Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979*, ed. by Bonnie McDougall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 197-223 (p. 213).

how a raid scene in the play *Daughters and Sons* adapted from Chapters 8 and 9 of *Romance of the Three Kingdom* is 'strongly reminiscent of, and probably copied from, the acts of individual daring so common in the adventure novels of the swordsman (*wuxia*) tradition, popular since the middle of the Qing period.'⁴⁸

Despite the banning of martial arts fiction in China, the genre continued to thrive in Hong Kong and for a while also in Taiwan, bringing yet another peak of popularity for this popular literature. In Hong Kong, martial arts fiction grew out of a martial arts tournament held in Macau in 1952. The White Crane School 白鶴派 and the Taichi School 太極拳 wanted to challenge each other in a tournament in Hong Kong, but were forbidden by the Hong Kong government. This tournament had to move to Macau, attracting great attention from the local public and was widely covered by local newspapers. But the White Crane School was beaten in two rounds, putting an abrupt end to the tournament. Now that people's attention had been aroused, they demanded more stories on the events. Local newspapers were quick to capitalize on the aftermath of this martial tournament. Hong Kong writer Liang Yusheng 梁羽生 was asked to produce a martial arts story for *Xin Wan Pao* 《新晚報》, a left-wing local paper. Three days later, in 1952, Liang's first martial art novel *Long hu dou jing hua* 《龍虎鬥京華》 [Duels in the capital] began serialization in the newspaper. Immense demand from local readers sprouted an instant growth of serialized martial arts fiction in Hong Kong papers. Three years later, in 1955, Jin Yong 金庸, now a master writer in this genre, also joined the league of martial arts fiction writer producing stories for local newspapers.

Pioneer martial arts novelist of the New School Liang Yusheng 梁羽生 (real name Chen Wentong 陳文統) was born in 1925. Liang produced thirty-five novels, totalling one hundred and sixty volumes, between 1952 and 1984 when he announced his official retirement from a 35-year writing career. His major works include *Long hu dou jing hua*

⁴⁸ Ibid.

《龍虎鬥京華》 [Duels in the capital]; *Bai fa mo nu zhuan* 《白髮魔女傳》 [The white-haired sorceress]; *Qi jian xia Tian shan* 《七劍下天山》 [Seven swordsmen from Tianshan Mountain]; *Jiang hu san nu xia* 《江湖三女俠》 [Three lady knights-errant]; *Ping zong xia ying lu* 《萍蹤俠影錄》 [Chronicles of the shadow swordsman]; *Bing chuan tian nu zhuan* 《冰川天女傳》 [The fairy maiden from the land of glaciers]; *Xia gu dan xin* 《俠骨丹心》 [Knight-errantry and loyalty]; *Feng lei zhen jiu zhou* 《風雷震九州》 [Wreaking havoc in the empire]; *Nu di qi ying zhuan* 《女帝奇英傳》 [Chronicles of Empress Wu]; *Feng yun lei dian* 《風雲雷電》 [The four young warriors]; *Guang ling jian* 《廣陵劍》 [The Guangling sword]; *San hua nu xia* 《散花女俠》 [The flower-scattering lady knight-errant]; *Huan jian qi qing lu* 《還劍奇情錄》 [Romance on returning a sword]; *Lian jian feng yun lu* 《聯劍風雲錄》 [Turmoil from sword blows]; *Yun hai yu gong yuan* 《雲海玉弓緣》 [The jade bow]; *Da Tang you xia zhuan* 《大唐游俠傳》 [The knight-errant of the Tang period]; *Mu ye liu xing* 《牡野流星》 [True identities of the grown-up children]; *Long feng bao chai yuan* 《龍鳳寶釵緣》 [Revenge after marriage]; and *Ming di feng yun lu* 《鳴鏑風雲錄》 [The great turmoil in the Song dynasty].

Another master martial arts novelist of the New School Jin Yong 金庸 (real name Cha Liangyong 查良鏞) was born in 1924. Jin started writing martial arts novels for *Xin Wan Pao* 《新晚報》, a left-wing local paper in 1955 before writing for his own *Ming Pao Daily* 《明報》, which he founded in 1959. Between 1955 and 1972, Jin produced twelve novels and three shorter ones, all collected in his 36-volume series of martial arts novels, comprising twelve titles. His works, with original English titles supplied by the publisher, are as follows: *Shu jian en chou lu* 《書劍恩仇錄》 [Book and sword, gratitude and revenge]; *Bi xue jian* 《碧血劍》 [The sword stained with royal blood]; *Xue shan fei hu* 《雪山飛狐》 [Flying fox of the snowy mountains] which contains two short stories 'Yuan yang dao 鴛鴦刀' [The couple sword] and 'Bai ma xiao xi feng 白馬嘯西風' [White horse neighing in the wind]; *She diao ying xiong zhuan* 《射鵰英雄傳》 [The eagle-shooting heroes]; *Shen diao xia lu* 《神鵰俠侶》 [The giant eagle and its companion]; *Fei hu wai zhuan* 《飛狐外傳》 [The young flying fox]; *Yi tian tu long ji* 《倚天屠龍記》 [The heaven

sword and the dragon sabre]; *Lian cheng jue* 《連城訣》 [A deadly secret]; *Tian long ba bu* 《天龍八部》 [The semi-gods and semi-devils]; *Xia ke xing* 《俠客行》 [Ode to the gallantry] which contains the short story 'Yue nu jian 越女劍' [Sword of the Yue maiden]; *Xiao ao jiang hu* 《笑傲江湖》 [The smiling, proud wanderer]; and *Lu ding ji* 《鹿鼎記》 [The duke of the Mount Deer].

Things had not gone too smoothly for Jin Yong in the earlier years. When Jin Yong first tried to get his *She diao ying xiong zhuan* 《射鵰英雄傳》 [The Eagle-shooting heroes] published in Taiwan in the late fifties, he was informed by the publisher that his title and a line in Mao Zedong's poems 'zhi shi wan gong she da diao 只識彎弓射大鵬 [knowing only how to shoot the eagle arching a bow]' happened to read alike. Jin Yong was suspected of Maoist propaganda and his book was subsequently banned. Sun Danning 孫淡寧 then travelled to Taiwan to sort things out. After much negotiation with the authority, it was agreed that the title be changed to *Da mo ying xiong zhuan* 《大漠英雄傳》 [Heroes of the Gobi Desert]. But the government still would not lift the ban and refused to relent despite defence from other Taiwan writers on Jin Yong's behalf. Jin Yong finally had to find another publisher in Hong Kong.⁴⁹

The development of martial arts fiction in Taiwan after the Communist takeover of Mainland China in 1949 witnessed many ups and downs.⁵⁰ Compared to their Hong Kong

⁴⁹ For more details on the banning of Jin Yong's martial arts fiction in Taiwan, see Shen Deng'en 沈登恩, 'Chu ban yuan qi 出版緣起 [Reason for publishing]', in *Zhu zi bai jia kan Jin Yong* 《諸子百家看金庸》 [Different writers on reading Jin Yong], by San Mao 三毛 and others (Taipei: Yuanjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1984), pp. 1-8 and also his 'Bai nian yi Jin Yong 百年一金庸 [Only one Jin Yong in a hundred years]', in *Zhu zi bai jia kan Jin Yong (2)* 《諸子百家看金庸(二)》 [Different writers on reading Jin Yong (2)], by Luo Longzhi 羅龍治 and others (Taipei: Yuanjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1985), pp. 1-7; Xiao Zhizun 蕭之尊, Dai Yijun 戴翼軍, and Chen Erxun 陳爾訓, compiled, *Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo da guan* 《中國武俠小說大觀》 [An encyclopedic study of Chinese martial arts fiction] (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 1993), p. 1676; and Ye Hongsheng 葉洪生, *Ye Hongsheng lun jian* 《葉洪生論劍》 [Ye Hongsheng on martial arts fiction], p.75, notes 69 and 77 on p. 109, and p. 334.

⁵⁰ A comprehensive account on the development of martial arts fiction in Taiwan is given in Ye Hongsheng 葉洪生, 'Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo shi lun 中國武俠小說史論 [On the history of Chinese martial arts fiction]', pp. 75-94. See also Lin Baochun 林保淳, 'Jiu jiu Taiwan de wu xia xiao shuo -- jie gou Jin Yong ji zou chu Jin Yong ti xi de mi si 救救台灣的武俠小說 -- 解構金庸及走出金庸體系的迷思 [Save Taiwan's

counterparts, Taiwan writers had to combat harsher conditions at home. A martial law enforced in 1951 banning writing or translations produced in Communist China also banned martial arts novels of the Old School plus those written in the 1930s; and in 1959, the Taiwan government again launched an effort to ban all martial arts novels published in Mainland China or Hong Kong, as well as those reprinted in Taiwan, aiming at both the Old School and New School.⁵¹ According to Ye Hongsheng, 葉洪生, Taiwan critic and editor of martial arts fiction, this political sanction in Taiwan cut budding writers off from the literary legacy of past masters; resulting in writing which avoided a historical background touching on dynastic changes or nation building, long considered a political taboo in Taiwan; and stifled innovations in the genre as writers produced mostly stereotyped products after old works were banned.⁵² Despite government measures to ban martial arts novels, the genre continued to thrive, especially writings incorporating fierce fighting and romance. Ye attributes this to three contributing factors: firstly, people found an easy outlet for their pent-up feelings in locally produced martial arts fiction, possibly the only affordable form of entertainment in a society still experiencing economic hardship and banning books published in Mainland China after the government moved to Taiwan in 1949; secondly, most of the well-known martial arts novelists of that period, who came originally from Mainland China, already conversant with literary formats and fighting scenes depicted by masters of the Old School, were still able to produce works gearing to local tastes; and thirdly, active support from publishers in Taiwan who spared no efforts in recruiting talents to produce works to meet the increasing demands of the market.⁵³

martial arts fiction: deconstructing Jin Yong and waking up from the mysterious Jin Yong system]', *Ming Pao Monthly* 《明報月刊》, 2 (1996), 18-20 and Zhang Jinbang 張金榜, 'Wu xia xiao shuo zai jin ri Taiwan 武俠小說在今日台灣 [Martial arts fiction in Taiwan]', *Ming Pao Monthly* 《明報月刊》, 2 (1996), 20. Additional information on martial arts fiction in Taiwan can be found in articles in Taiwan newspapers and magazines, bibliographical data of which are found in Kai Portmann, pp. 201-11, 225-27, 230-35.

⁵¹ Ye Hongsheng 葉洪生, *Ye Hongsheng lun jian* 《葉洪生論劍》 [Ye Hongsheng on martial arts fiction], p.75 and pp. 109-10, notes 69 and 70.

⁵² Ibid., pp. 75-76.

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 77-78.

Another major representative of the New School of martial arts fiction is Taiwan writer Gu Long 古龍, (real name Xiong Yaohua 熊耀華) (1938-1985). His earlier works *Cang gong shen jian* 《蒼穹神劍》 [The magic bow and arrow], *Piao xiang jian yu* 《飄香劍雨》 [The flourishing sword], *Can jin que yu* 《殘金缺玉》 [Broken gold and missing jade] and *Yue yi xing xie* 《月異星邪》 [The weird moon and stars], modelled on traditional martial arts novels, first appeared in 1960. Intent on creating a new type out of the genre, Gu Long experimented with new styles of writing. From the mid-sixties, his works began to assume a distinctive new look, combining martial arts, Japanese and Western detective stories, psycho-analysis, romance, turning his central characters into some kind of Oriental Sherlock Holmes.⁵⁴ His stories are set vaguely in time and space to get round the political taboo in Taiwan on dynastic building. He writes in crisp, short sentences, often starting a new paragraph with each sentence. His works read more like film scripts, with scenes distinctly marked out. Ye Hongsheng attributes Gu Long's success to his ability to create a brisk pace in his writing, by reducing all fighting scenes to only a few tricks, to match the increasingly fast tempo of Taiwan during a period when her industries were undergoing transition, as well as his skills in grafting Western popular fiction such as *The Godfather* and James Bond into his own to cater to expectations of an Xenophilic audience in Taiwan.⁵⁵ But the quality of his works began to deteriorate in the mid-seventies, possibly due to being over prolific.

Being one of the most popular martial arts fiction writers in this age, no doubt, also the most prolific, Gu Long's works were widely adapted into TV serials or movies. Hero protagonists in some of his novels, such as Lu Xiaofeng 陸小鳳, Chu Liuxiang 楚留香, Hua Manlou 花滿樓 have become household names. Gu Long's major works include *Ming jian feng liu* 《名劍風流》 [The womanising swordsman]; *Jue dai shuang jiao* 《絕代雙

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 92.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 93.

驕》[Twin brothers of the age]; *Tian ya ming yue dao* 《天涯·明月·刀》[Land's end, bright moon, sword]; *Duo qing jian ke wu qing jian* 《多情劍客無情劍》[The romantic swordsman and the cruel sword]; *Tie xue zhuan qi (Xia dao Chu Liuxiang)* 《鐵血傳奇》(《俠盜楚留香》)[Romance of Chu Liuxiang the altruistic burglar]; *Lu Xiaofeng* 《陸小鳳》[Lu Xiaofeng]; *Liu xing hu dei jian* 《流星·蝴蝶·劍》[Meteors, butterflies, and swords]; *Qi zhong wu qi* 《七種武器》[Seven kinds of weapons]; *Huan hua xi jian lu* 《浣花洗劍錄》[Swords clanging]; *Xiao shi yi lang* 《蕭十一郎》[Xiao the eleventh brother]; *Wu lin wai shi* 《武林外史》[The pseudo-history of the martial world]; *Da qi ying xiong zhuan* 《大旗英雄傳》[The heroic deeds]; and *Tie dan da xia hun* 《鐵膽大俠魂》[The bold knight-errant].

Besides leading writers such Jin Yong 金庸, Liang Yusheng 梁羽生, and Gu Long 古龍, major writers of the New School of martial arts fiction include Wan Ruian 溫瑞安, Ni Kuang 倪匡, Chen Qingyun 陳青雲, Wolongsheng 臥龍生, Zhuge Qingyun 諸葛青雲, Sima Ling 司馬翎, Banxialouzhu 伴霞樓主, Xiao Yi 蕭逸, Langhonghuan 郎紅浣, Qin Hong 秦紅, Gao Yong 高庸, and Duguhong 獨孤紅, all productive during the early 1960s to the mid-seventies, with some continuing to be productive to this day. According to Chen Mo 陳墨, Liang Yusheng is the representative writer of the fifties, Jin Yong the sixties, Gu Long the seventies, while Xiao Yi and Wan Ruian the eighties.⁵⁶

Unlike the Old School of martial arts fiction, the New School represents one's individual quest for personal fulfillment, a free spirit grown out of freedom and democracy of contemporary society. Fighters portrayed in the New School of martial arts fiction no longer content themselves with pledging their service to the imperial house. Instead, they seek to strike out on their own individual quest for fame and honour, be they engaged in helping the needy, seeking revenge, wreaking havoc to defend the nation, or developing a new

⁵⁶ Chen, Mo 陳墨, *Hai wai xin wu xia xiao shuo lun* 《海外新武俠小說論》[A study of writers of new martial arts fiction overseas] (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 1994), p. 25.

school of combat skills. In short, whatever endeavours they set out to undertake in life, they choose to do so on their own free will, as an obligation to themselves rather than to others.

Perceptions of Martial Arts Fiction in English Translation

An examination of the two review articles on martial arts fiction translated into English, one on *Blades from the Willows* and the other on *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, reveals different perceptions of martial arts fiction in the West, which, in turn, could be attributable to different literary and cultural assumptions brought to bear on the texts by individual reviewers. Richard Vivian's review article on Robert Chard's translation *Blades from the Willows* by Huanzhulouzhū appeared in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*.⁵⁷ One may assume that Vivian, a Westerner, could be one of the general readers to whom the publisher Wellsweep, of London, targetted this book.⁵⁸ It would appear that his reaction to *Blades from the Willows* may exemplify a typical Western reader's initial response to traditional Chinese fiction as discussed earlier in Chapter 2. The title of his review article "Convolutd Kungfu pot-boiler" perhaps already bespeaks Vivian's negative response to this new foreign genre. He accuses the publisher of choosing a work with 'an apparently pointless plot and an anticlimatic ending' when attempting to introduce a so-called martial arts novel published in the 1940s, a genre of popular Chinese fiction, to a wider reading public. To Vivian, the three young heroes in the story, being central to the plot, play little part in its outcome. Neither do they play any part in martial arts. He deplores how a tale of fantasy makes for poor plot development, pointing out that:

⁵⁷ Richard Vivian, 'Convolutd Kungfu Pot-boiler', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 November, 1991, 31.

⁵⁸ The homepage of Wellsweep in the UK, on "<http://www.poptel.org.uk/password/wellsweep/html>", introduces the publisher as: 'Wellsweep published literary translation from Chinese, and makes occasional innovative forays into the history, fantasy and popular culture of China. The press was founded in 1988. Its ultimate goal is to allow the reading public to appreciate Chinese literature with the degree of uncompromising sophistication and unalloyed enjoyment which can be found in the exploration of other better-known literatures which have been translated into English.' Internet search made on August 4, 1996.

These mere mortals are powerless onlookers and bargaining chips in this fairy tale, where the action is decided not with the swordsmanship or fisticuffs of real men but with the elixirs, light beams, talismans and powers of flight of sorcerers, demons and dragon-like beasts. Such *dei ex machina* make for poor plot development.⁵⁹

Vivian also deplores its characterization, finding it just as weak as the plot. Its weakness lies in the fact that:

What the characters lack in quality they more than make up for in their quantity; the list of 40 named dramatis personae, though helpful, does little to sort out the large number of extraneous walk-on parts with their confusing and hard-to-call names.⁶⁰

Vivian deplores the characterization to the extent that he even considers two of the three mortal heroes "cardboard stereotypes", lacking in humanity. But he admits that the fault does not lie with the translator, as he claims to have improved the narrative flow by leaving out many repetitive passages. To the reviewer, Chard's translations of proper names seem "needlessly tortuous" as some of the names fail either to convey meaning or the rhythm of the original Chinese. The reviewer goes on to point out that translating trisyllabic Chinese personal names may bring out the meaning while transliterating the given names may preserve the rhythm. What seems to baffle Vivian is that the translator should present what he apparently admits is a low-brow novel as an attractive example of its genre. Vivian's review article may offer some insights to prospective translators of martial arts fiction. It can be argued that a Western reader would tend to approach this traditional Chinese literary genre with a mind imbued in Western literature, applying literary criteria of the West to evaluate the text. Try as he might to surmount linguistic or cultural barriers in the text, the translator could never hope to bridge the cosmological gulf between a Western mind and a Chinese mind,⁶¹ for the fundamental issues at stake boil down essentially to a different mind set of the Western reader, hence different expectations, in appraising an "unrelated

⁵⁹ Vivian.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ See Frederick W. Mote, 'The cosmological gulf between China and the West', in *Chinese History and Culture*, ed. by C. Buxbaum and Frederick W. Mote (Hong Kong: Cathy Press, 1972), pp. 3-21.

literature". One could argue that literary assumptions towards a new foreign literature may determine, among other factors, whether a genre newly translated could elicit the same kind of appeal as among original readers. It would seem that the greater the cosmological gulf, the more divergent the literary assumptions and expectations of two cultures, hence the greater the disappointment. This may perhaps explain why in some instances, adaptation or rewriting, to the extent of performing operation on the plot or characterization may find more ready acceptance among readers than full translation. The former may imply tailoring the text to dovetail to the literary assumptions of the reader while the latter leaving the reader to explore the cosmological gulf on his own.

Michael A. DeMarco, another reviewer of Chard's *Blades from the Willows*, however, expressed something more positive. He found the Chard's translation 'as bizarre as fiction can be, had the odd feeling that the story was all possible. At least in China it could be so. [...] *Blades from the Willows* provides very enjoyable reading [...].'⁶²

Hua Laura Wu's review article on *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* appeared in the *China Review International*, a journal of reviews of scholarly literature in Chinese Studies. Unlike Vivian, Wu saw more sense and found acceptable what would appear to be unpalatable to a Western reader like Vivian owing to distinct differences in cosmological views inherent in the two cultures. Wu seems to be able to discern something rather positive in Jin Yong's detailed descriptions of a five-day combat between Phoenix and Gully, which she considers to be conducive to furthering the development of the plot and portraying the two protagonists in the story, as she rightfully observes:

⁶² Excerpt of Micheal A. DeMarco's review found on Wellsweep's homepage, Online, Internet: "<http://www.demon.co.uk/eastfield/wshome.html>", August 24, 1997. A full review written by DeMarco, editor of *Journal of Asian Martial Arts*, an academic/scholarly journal as classified by CD-ROM *Serials Directory*, August 24, 1997, can be found in *Journal of Asian Martial Arts*, 1.1 (1992), Online, Internet, August 24, 1997.

The depiction of martial combat in Jin Yong's works serves to advance various thematic and/or aesthetic considerations. For instance, the duel between Phoenix Miao and Gully Hu in *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* (pp. 119-207), although elaborated by a description of pageantry and charged with considerable excitement, is depicted for multiple purposes: its functions as an important link in the narrative chain to explain away the mysteries surrounding the vendetta among the involved families and builds up narrative tension, preparing teleologically for the final confrontation between Phoenix and the hero-protagonist named in the title. It is also at such junctures in the narrative development that the *dramatis personae* are given their revealing portrayals and thus emerge as memorable characters of individuality instead of conventionalized heroes and villains.⁶³

Wu continues to point out how the description of the duel, a generic ingredient of martial arts fiction, is rendered thematically significant by Jin Yong, observing that:

Here, the stereotyped contrast of righteous knight and vicious villain is problematized. Characters like Pastoral Tian and Fortune Yin, decked with the desirable physical and/or social-cultural traits that are conventionally associated with the hero, turn out to be villains marked by cowardice and treachery or people of dubious quality, while characters like Fox and Quad, assigned with undesirable physical traits or even deformities, which are usually the hallmarks of a villain, are actually persons of virtue. Even Phoenix and Fox, representatives of the ideal knight, are not portrayed as flawless heroes. Their inflated sense of personal justice and blind enthusiasm for personal revenge are depicted as the source of the final, and possibly tragic, impasse.⁶⁴

It can be argued that this could be another instance of the application of the yin-yang theory to explain a traditional Chinese novel, employed earlier by Hegel in his "*Sui-t'ang yen-i* and the Aesthetics of the Seventeenth-Century Suchou Elite" (1977) and Plaks in his "*Allegory in Hsi-yu chi and Hung-lou meng*" (1977). One could also argue that only when two literary like minds meet, as in the case of Wu's and Jin Yong's, where both literary and cultural assumptions converge, could martial arts fiction as a literary genre be appreciated in full. Wu highlights the contribution made by Jin Yong, asserting that:

All the innovations -- thematic, technical, and conventional -- that Jin Yong has introduced to *wuxia* fiction make him a literary legend: he almost singlehandedly

⁶³ Hua Laura Wu, p. 145.

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 145-46.

transforms the genre and dismantles the barrier preventing *wuxia* fiction from reaching the status of serious literature.⁶⁵

Wu also perceives the urgency of making martial arts fiction known to the academic world in the West, claiming that 'his [Jin Yong's] works, representing an emerging and evolving literary genre, merit academic attention long overdue both in and beyond the Chinese-speaking communities.'⁶⁶ And she concludes in an appreciative tone that:

Olivia Mok's translation of *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* delivers a timely service to the burgeoning genre by introducing its best writer to a wider, non-Chinese reading public and to academia. Her translation, despite some minor errors and oversights, is of a high standard, being lucid, readable, well-paced, and truthful to both the original text and the narrative rhythm of the original storytellers, the latter achievement being a more demanding task. It facilitates the initiation of a reader unfamiliar with this particular genre into a new and exciting territory of literature. It can also whet the appetite of a student of Chinese fiction for deeper explorations into the field.⁶⁷

Like didactic functions associated with Chinese traditional novels, martial arts fiction imparts to readers pedagogical as well as entertainment values. Chang Tsong-zung claims that most overseas Chinese youngsters in the 1950s and 1960s owed their education in Chinese culture to martial arts fiction, particularly Jin Yong's novels, observing that 'as in the late 19th century, these period writings made vivid a fast disappearing world of traditional China; above all else it kept alive a world of values, safe from the corruption of a modern mercantile society.'⁶⁸

Margaret Ng concurs with Chang that Jin Yong's martial arts novels have helped to preserve traditional Chinese culture outside China since 1949, pointing out that:

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 147.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Chang Tsong-zung, 'Martial-arts Fiction Keeps the Past Alive', p. 40.

His [Jin Yong's] intellectual playing field is the unfolding of the Chinese culture in all its splendour through history, reaching out from the mystic past, far into the unknown future. His '*kungfu* novels', as the superficial often regard them, may appear to tell improbable tales of adventures and love between unbelievably lovely maidens and pure-minded knights. In reality, they are exhibition cases fashioned in homage of everything that the Chinese in diaspora (so to speak) are most proud of: China's history, literature, art, thought, social order, traditions and moral values. They are what is dearest to the Chinese identity, what they would preserve in a golden Ark in the tabernacle of their soul, until China comes to her rightful place in the world again.⁶⁹

Martial arts novels are considered popular literature as they are written for a large readership or audience in its own day. David Johnson emphasizes the importance of audience for Chinese popular literature in his "Chinese Popular Literature and Its Contents" (1981).⁷⁰ Humm, Stigant, and Widdowson point out that there are more important elements than the audience to be considered in popular fictions, as propounded in their introduction to *Popular Fictions: Essays in Literature and History* (1986):

Popular fictions are made not simply by audience response, but more importantly, by the determined efforts of some authors, film-makers and publishers: some, that is to say, who so consciously gear their books, films or plays to what they believe or know to be popular, who have such a heightened sense of market, demand and 'taste', that they must know what they are 'creating' is, in fact, a *product*. Most fiction is of course a product in the sense that it is written or made to be sold and marketed, but one characteristic of 'popular' fiction must be that *its* relationship to the market, *its* place in the socio-economic relations of production, is different from that of 'non-popular' fiction.⁷¹

It can be argued that the three top contemporary martial arts novelists Jin Yong, Liang Yusheng, and Gu Long must all possess this 'heightened sense of market, demand and "taste"' as they all seemed to know what "product" to create. One could perhaps surmise

⁶⁹ Margaret Ng, preface, *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* (1996), pp. xiii-xv (p. xiii).

⁷⁰ David Johnson, 'Chinese Popular Literature & Its Contents', *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*, 3.2 (1981), 225-33.

⁷¹ Peter Humm, Paul Stigant, and Peter Widdowson, eds., *Popular Fictions: Essays in Literature and History* (New York: Methuen, 1986), p. 8.

that one possible reason why Jin Yong crowns all other in terms of popularity and success is that he himself is a publisher, marketing his own series of martial arts fiction. He founded also his own newspaper, the *Ming Pao Daily* 《明報》 in 1959 and launched his own magazines, the *Ming Pao Monthly* 《明報月刊》 in 1966 and the *Ming Pao Weekly* 《明報周刊》 in 1968. All three publications are still widely read in Hong Kong and overseas.

Martial Arts Fiction in Other Asian Languages

The immense popularity of martial arts fiction enjoyed by local Chinese soon spread to other Asian countries, particularly to countries populated by large overseas Chinese communities where popular Chinese traditional novels, historical novels, and *gongan* stories [public case in particular, have been widely read for centuries, either in the original Chinese language or in translated languages.⁷² The impact of martial arts fiction can be seen in the various channels by which this genre penetrated neighbouring countries in Asia. Not only was martial arts fiction favourably received, either in its original language or in translations, this literary genre has also inspired its local writers. Possible channels included reading the original texts in Chinese in the Sinicised countries where the local elite was trained in classical Chinese and were able to read the fiction in colloquial Chinese; or translating the genre into local languages in countries where Chinese was a foreign tongue known only to Chinese migrants and their descendants. Translation of prototypes of the genre into

⁷² Chinese traditional novels most widely read, either in the original Chinese language or in translations produced in different Asian languages include 《三國誌演義》 [Romance of the Three Kingdoms], 《水滸傳》 [The Water Margin], 《西遊記》 [Journey to the West], 《金瓶梅》 [The Golden Lotus], 《羅通掃北》 [Luo Tong clears the north], 《包公案》 [Public cases of Judge Bao], 《施公案》 [Public cases of Judge Shi]; novels of warriors such as 《薛仁貴征東》 [Xue Rengui clears the east], 《狄青萬花樓》 [The pavilion of the 10,000 flowers], 《梁山伯與祝英台》 [Romance of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai], 《趙匡胤飛龍傳》 [The story of the flying dragon], 《三合明珠寶劍全傳》 [The complete story of the triple sword adorned with bright pearls], 《楊文廣平閩全傳》 [The complete story of Yang Wenguang's pacification of Min], 《反唐演義》 [The revolt against the Tang dynasty], 《三寶太監下西洋》 [Expeditions of eunuch Zheng He in the Southern seas], 《好逑傳》 [The Fortunate Union], 《紅樓夢》 [Dream of the Red Chamber] 《忠烈俠義傳》 [The story of loyal and gallant men], 《平妖記》 [Suppression of sorcery], 《今古奇觀》 [Strange tales old and new], 《平山冷燕》 [Ping, Shan, Leng and Yan], and 《太平廣記》 [Extensive records of the Grand Tranquility reign].

Mongolian, Vietnamese, Thai, Malay, Cambodian, Indonesian, Makassarese, and Korean goes back at least to the seventeenth century, while the translation of martial arts fiction proper has been active since the 1920s.⁷³

Mongolian translation of novels of swordsmen and trial cases, particularly the cycle of adventure novels of the wise Judge Bao and other stories of the *gongan* 公案 (public cases) genre, which Ma Yau-woon considered to be the forerunner of martial arts fiction, began when the first translation of *The Water Margin* appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century, followed by a Mongolian translation of *San xia wu yi* 《三俠五義》 [Three knights-errant and five altruists] in 1907, which, in turn, was followed by more than twenty sequels and imitations including *Xiao wu yi* 《小五義》 [The junior altruists], *Jiu yi shi ba xia* 《九義十八俠》 [Nine altruists and eighteen knights-errant], *Da ba yi* 《大八義》 [Eight elder altruists], *Long tu gong an* 《龍圖公案》 [Public cases of Judge Bao, known also as Bao Longtu], *Bao gong an* 《包公案》 [Public cases of Judge Bao], and *Shi gong*

⁷³ Translations of martial arts fiction and its prototypes, along with other Chinese traditional novels, into different Asian languages are found in articles collected in Claudine Salmon, ed. *Literary Migrations. Traditional Chinese Fiction in Asia (17-20th Centuries)* (Beijing: International Culture Publishing Corporation, 1987). For the appeal of martial arts fiction in South-East Asian countries, see pp. 13, 16-17. For translations into Mongolian, see Boris Riftin's 'Mongolian translations of Old Chinese Novels and Stories -- A Tentative Bibliographic Survey', pp. 213-62 (pp. 237-41); translations into Vietnamese, see Yan Bo's 'The Influence of Chinese Fiction on Vietnamese Literature', pp. 265-316 (pp. 282-83); translation into Thai, see pp. 5-6, plus Prapin Manomaivibool's 'Thai Translations of Chinese Literary Works', pp. 317-20 (pp. 318-19); translations into Cambodian, see p. 6 and Jacques Nepote and Hoc Dy Khing's 'Chinese Literary Influence on Cambodia in the 19th and 20th Centuries', pp. 321-72 (pp. 341, 345-46); translations into Javanese in Indonesia, see Claudine Salmon, 'A Note on Javanese Works Derived from Chinese Fiction', pp. 375-94; translations into Malay in Indonesia, see Claudine Salmon's 'Malay Translations of Chinese Fiction in Indonesia', pp. 395-440, especially the section 'Overwhelming Success of Cloak-and-Dagger Novels (1924-1972)', pp. 421-26; translations into Makassarese in Indonesia, see Gilbert Hamonic and Claudine Salmon, 'Translations of Chinese Fiction into Makassarese', pp. 569-92 (pp. 576-77); translations into Indonesian, see Leo Suryadinata's 'Postwar Kongfu Novels in Indonesia: A Preliminary Survey', pp. 623-59 (pp. 624-26, 633, 628); translations into Malay in Malaya, see Claudine Salmon, 'Writings in Romanized Malay by the Chinese of Malay: A Preliminary Inquiry', pp. 441-96; and translations into Korean, see Kim Dong-uk, 'The influence of Chinese Stories and Novels on Korean Fiction', trans. W.E. Skillend, pp. 55-84 (pp. 55-57) and Li Zhizhu 李致洙, 'Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo zai Hanguo de fan yi jie shao yu ying xiang 中國武俠小說在韓國的翻譯介紹與影響 [Translation and influence of martial arts fiction in Korea]', in *Xia yu Zhongguo wen hua* 《俠與中國文化》 [Knight-errantry and Chinese culture], ed. by Department of Chinese, Tamkang University (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shudian, 1993), pp. 77-90.

an 《施公案》 [Public cases of Judge Shi], and later, with a new four-volume edition of *The Water Margin* in Mongolian brought out in Inner Mongolia in 1978.⁷⁴

Sinicized Vietnam has a long history of importing Chinese romanesque literature, first in Chinese, then translated into the *nôm* writing, which was later replaced by the *quoc ngu*, a romanized script in the mid-nineteenth century.⁷⁵ In his "The Influence of Chinese Fiction on Vietnamese Literature" (1987), Yan Bo points out that despite changes in language and writing, the Vietnamese have maintained close ties with Chinese romanesque literature as 'it was first a source of inspiration for authors writing in Chinese or in *nôm*. Then, after the spread of *quoc ngu*, Chinese romanesque literature was seen as part of the cultural heritage that was carefully treasured in translation.'⁷⁶ The introduction of the easy-to-understand *quoc ngu*, plus the fact that there were few books written in the new Vietnamese language, had created a desperate need for more translations to be undertaken. Translations of martial arts fiction proper began around 1925, when the urban population multiplied and local printing boomed in the country. The Vietnamese infatuation with martial arts fiction occurred at the same time as that among the population in big cities in China. Martial arts fiction was banned in China in 1949, yet the Vietnamese translations of martial arts fiction, along with historical novels, which had taken over sentimental novels in the interim, continued after the Second World War. It could be argued that the existing state of Vietnamese interest in martial arts fiction can also be gauged from a discovery of a Vietnamese Internet homepage on Jin Yong,⁷⁷ plus a survey on some academic libraries in

⁷⁴ Boris Riftin, 'Mongolian translations of Old Chinese Novels and Stories -- A Tentative Bibliographic Survey', in *Literary Migrations*, pp. 237-41.

⁷⁵ All references to Vietnamese translations, including martial arts fiction, are taken from Yan Bo, 'The Influence of Chinese Fiction on Vietnamese Literature', in *Literary Migrations*, pp. 265-316. Particularly informative is a tentative list of Vietnamese translations of Chinese popular fiction found on pp. 286-312, most of the translations are historical novels or swordsmen novels.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 283.

⁷⁷ A homepage on Jin Yong written in Vietnamese was found on August 1, 1996, internet address being "http://www.saigon.com/~lamngn/Kd.html". Although I do not read Vietnamese, I came away with the impression that substantial efforts have gone into this project, judging by its extensive coverage with

U.S.A., particularly the Melvyl on-line catalogue system of the University of California in California where Asian immigrants concentrate, which shows that martial arts fiction is still being translated into Vietnamese or reprinted in Vietnamese in the U.S.A.⁷⁸ It would appear that among the Vietnamese, particularly those residing in the U.S.A., some may continue to find an extension of their treasured cultural heritage in martial arts fiction.

In Thailand, translations of martial arts fiction, published both in book form and in newspapers, first appeared in 1957.⁷⁹ The popularity of martial arts fiction in Thai translations, with Jin Yong and Gu Long being translated most, continued at least up till the late 1980s, according to Prapin Manomaivibool, who mentions these translational phenomena in his article "Thai Translations of Chinese Literary Works" (1987). The great demand for martial arts fiction, coupled by limited time allowed for translation yielded a translational style that is "hybrid", not following the model Thai translation of the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* all the way through, as Prapin Manomaivibool observes:

The style and diction of Thai translation of *wuxia* type stories have their own characteristics: the sentence structures are similar to those of the Chinese language and some words and expressions in Chinese are translated into Thai in "word-by-word" fashion with no consideration for their deeper or interpretive meaning. However, such expressions are understood among *wuxia* type story fans.⁸⁰

systematic headings, nice presentations, and quality art works. A complete English translation of Jin Yong's shortest story *Sword of the Yueh Maiden* also featured in this homepage.

⁷⁸ This survey shows that a recent Vietnamese translation of Gu Long's work and also one of Jin Yong's were published as recently as 1995 in the U.S.A., kept by Cornell University, although most of the Vietnamese translations found in the libraries were brought out during the 1980s, mostly reprints of earlier translations published in Saigon in the 1960s. Of the six academic libraries, out of eleven surveyed, where translations of martial arts fiction in other Asian languages are found, only the library at the University of Michigan keeps detailed bibliographic records showing whether or not individual translations published in the States are reprints of earlier copies produced in Saigon. Discussion of other findings of the survey will be taken up later in this chapter.

⁷⁹ All references to martial arts fiction translated into Thai taken from Prapin Manomaivibool, 'Thai Translations of Chinese Literary Works', in *Literary Migrations*, pp. 317-20.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 319.

One could perhaps argue that in martial arts fiction, the story itself matters more than its form, as can be observed in the case of Thai translations, for style can be sacrificed in good stories full of intrigues, suspense, and excitement, told by talented story-tellers such as Jin Yong and Gu Long, so long as the story is delivered to the readers in time to whet their appetites.

In Cambodia, the government adopted a hard-line policy to combat the Chinese cultural influence within the country. In the early sixties, China and Cambodia agreed to resolve the problem of the Chinese in Cambodia. When the resistance against Chinese culture softened, Kungfu films from Hong Kong began to flood the Cambodian market, lending support to Chinese influence.⁸¹ Although no direct translations of martial arts fiction were made into Cambodian, the influence of swordsmen stories could still be found in Chinese serials in the newspapers and the ever-increasing adaptations of Chinese works into Cambodian.⁸² Towards the end of the 1960s, when traditional values and recognized institutions collapsed inside Cambodia, martial arts fiction was appropriated unconsciously,⁸³ along with the puritanical and moralizing ultra "Left" trend of thought current during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, to combat the situation. The Cambodians perhaps found values in the 'rough justice of the cloak-and-dagger literature in which

⁸¹ Jacques Nepote and Hoc Dy Khing, 'Chinese Literary Influence on Cambodia in the 19th and 20th Centuries', in *Literary Migrations*, p. 341.

⁸² Ibid., pp. 371-72, note 74 contains a list of serials, published independently or in newspapers, between the late 1960s and the early 1970s, while p. 372, note 75 carries some titles published after 1966.

⁸³ Cf. the case of conscious appropriation of Milan Kundera's works in the West, in Piotr Kuhiwczak, 'Translation as Appropriation: The Case of Milan Kundera's *The Joke*', in *Translation, History and Culture*, ed. by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere (London & New York: Pinter, 1990) pp. 118-30. After pointing out that the East European postwar writers 'are not perceived as writers with something vital to communicate about the human condition, but as political animals ...' (p. 122), Kuhiwczak laments that 'the first English version of the novel [Kundera's *The Joke*] is not simply an inadequate translation of the Czech text, but an appropriation of the original, resulting from the translators' and publishers' untested assumptions about Eastern Europe, East European writing, and the ability of the Western reader to decode complex cultural messages' (p. 124).

people on the fringe of society succeed in redressing the evils perpetuated by the establishment.'⁸⁴

In Indonesia, translations of Chinese fiction were brought out in Javanese, Makassarese, Madurese, Malay, or more appropriate, Indonesian. Relatively few books on Chinese fiction were translated into Javanese as the descendants of Chinese living in the region were assimilated into the society, with some probably so completely acculturated that they began writing in Javanese themselves.⁸⁵ According to Hamonic and Salmon, translations of Chinese fiction in Makassarese could not be traced before the late 1920s.⁸⁶ As in Java, there was a revival of interest in Chinese culture among the Peranakan circles towards the end of the nineteenth century. In Makassar, people agree that the interest in translations of Chinese fiction emanated from women, as Peranakan women, extremely fond of translations of Chinese novels, used to read these stories in the evening in front of an audience.⁸⁷ Hamonic and Salmon observe that as in Java, the Peranakan's marked taste for historical novels was followed by martial arts fiction and public cases, then followed by fantastic novels and novels of manners, as it appears from the stories which can be identified.⁸⁸ Malay translations of Chinese fiction in Indonesia in the last quarter of the nineteenth century were motivated not only by a linguistic change within the Chinese communities of Central and East Java, aided by the spread of Malay newspapers in all the big cities in Java, as the public could not find enough Javanese translations to whet their appetites; but also by the demand from educated daughters of Peranakan who had acquired

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 345.

⁸⁵ Salmon, 'A Note on Javanese Works Derived from Chinese Fiction', in *Literary Migrations*, p. 377.

⁸⁶ Hamonic and Salmon, 'Translations of Chinese Fiction into Makassarese', in *Literary Migrations*, p. 569. All references on Makassarese translations taken from this source.

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 571-72.

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 576-77. See also the list of Makassarese translations of Chinese novels by Liem Kheng Yong on pp. 578-85.

a taste for reading like the men and were to be instructed in all kind of knowledge.⁸⁹ Besides historical novels, martial arts fiction is another genre that has been translated into Malay in Indonesia.⁹⁰ The translation of historical novels goes back at least to the nineteenth century, while the translation of martial arts fiction began only in the twentieth century, attaining overwhelming success in the decades after 1924. During this period, historical novels, greatly popular in earlier periods, gradually gave way to martial arts fiction as a burgeoning genre. Martial arts fiction appeared in newspapers, in magazines, and was also brought out in book form, running in several sequels. Works by Huanzhulou zhu 還珠樓主, Pingjiang Xuxiaosheng 平江不肖生, and Bai Yu 白羽 were either read in their original by Totok Chinese or translated into Malay for Peranakan during this period. According to Claudine Salmon, 1930 marked the apogee of martial arts fiction in Malay translations.⁹¹ This literary genre, which met the aspirations of the local reading public, popular among both Peranakan and native Indonesians, was brought to a halt when the Dutch Indies was occupied by the Japanese in 1942. In the fifties and sixties, works of Jin Yong 金庸 and Liang Yusheng 梁羽生 from Hong Kong were considered most popular. But serializations of works by these two major Hong Kong writers had fallen prey to political situations in Indonesia during that period.⁹² Before 1958, newspapers in Indonesia were either pro-Beijing or pro-Taipei. After that year, all pro-Taipei newspapers were banned because of Taiwan's implication in anti-government

⁸⁹ Salmon, 'Malay Translations of Chinese Fiction in Indonesia', in *Literary Migrations*, p. 413.

⁹⁰ All references to Malay translations in Indonesia, including martial arts fiction, are made from Salmon's 'Malay Translations of Chinese Fiction in Indonesia', in *Literary Migrations*, pp. 395-440, especially the section 'Overwhelming Success of Cloak-and-Dagger Novels (1924-1972)', pp. 421-26 and Suryadinata's 'Postwar Kungfu Novels in Indonesia: A Preliminary Survey', in *Literary Migrations*, pp. 623-55. Two other sources which may also provide useful information are *Indonesian Popular Serial Fiction: Martial Arts, Romance* (Indonesia: s.n., n.d.) and Tan Siew Eng, compiled, *Chinese Kungfu Stories in Indonesia: A Bibliography Selected from the IDC Collection*, BISA Special Project 6 (Sydney: Bibliographic Information on Southeast Asia, 1982).

⁹¹ Salmon, 'Malay Translations of Chinese Fiction in Indonesia', in *Literary Migrations*, p. 424, see also pp. 437-38, note 37 for films that laid hold of martial arts fiction during that period.

⁹² Suryadinata, 'Postwar Kungfu Novels in Indonesia: A Preliminary Survey', in *Literary Migrations*, pp. 624-26.

activities in Indonesia. Liang Yusheng, regarded as Pro-Beijing, continued to have his works serialized in the existing Pro-Beijing newspapers. Jin Yong, although Taiwan regarded him as "left-wing" then and banned his works, was considered as "right-wing" in Indonesia and was thus banned from the daily newspapers. But Jin Yong's works in book form continued to thrive. Martial arts novels found popularity among both Peranakan and indigenous newspaper readers.⁹³ Peranakan newspapers in Malay serialized Peranakan translators whose works were modelled after the writings of Jin Yong and Liang Yusheng while Indonesian newspapers published adaptations under the names of the translators. In his "Postwar Kungfu Novels in Indonesia: A Preliminary Survey" (1987), Suryadinata reminds us that the popularity of martial arts fiction has innovated indigenous Indonesian *cerita silat*, remarking that 'more indigenous writers have written indigenous *cerita silat* for various popular magazines. These writers changed the Chinese kungfu novels into the Indonesian setting.'⁹⁴ In the late fifties and early sixties, martial arts fiction was banned from the newspapers following the launching of the anti-Chinese campaign. But this genre continued to survive in book form. In 1965, both Peranakan and indigenous left-wing/Pro-Beijing newspapers were banned after the coup. And after that year, the adaptations and imitations of martial arts fiction switched to mass production in printing and publishing presses set up by many of the translators themselves so as to meet the growing demand for this genre. The sales of martial arts fiction was boosted by kungfu movies made in Hong Kong and Taiwan. The seventies and eighties witnessed the popularity of Taiwan martial arts novelist Gu Long.⁹⁵ Suryadinata observes that while Tjan Ing Djiu 曾榮球, a successful Peranakan Chinese translator of Gu Long's works, appeals to the Peranakans who are familiar with some Chinese terms and culture, indigenous readers prefer Asmaraman S. Kho Ping Hoo's 許平和 works as his writings are more "indigenized".⁹⁶

⁹³ Ibid., p. 628.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 633-34.

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 634-36.

Kho was educated in the "Dutch-Indigenous-School". Most of his works were serialized before being brought out in book form in his own printing press and publishing house. Suryadinata sees the influence of Chinese martial arts novels in Kho's works, observing that:

It might be true that he did not translate the works of other Chinese kungfu writers, but reading his novels, one gets the impression that he was very familiar with Chinese kungfu novels and was heavily influenced by them. The stories, book-titles and characters have strong Chinese kungfu novel flavour. Initially, most of his kungfu novels bore Chinese titles in Hokkien pronunciation.[...] But in recent years, he gradually dropped this practice and only used Indonesian titles.[...] His later works also include Chinese and non-Chinese characters.⁹⁷

Suryadinata also observes that Kho appears to have introduced a new "tradition" in the kungfu novel writing in Indonesia when he preached intermarriage based on love in his nine-volume *Kilat Pedang Membela Cinta*, published in 1981, which is a love story between a Chinese and a Javanese in the Majapahit era.⁹⁸ Although Kho's novels were written in Bahasa Indonesian, Hokkien terms popular among the Peranakan Chinese have continued to feature in his works.

Chinese writing in Malaya before the 1950s was a tributary feeding into the mainstream of Chinese literature in China, as Wang Gungwu observes in his "A Short Introduction to Chinese Writings in Malaya" (1964). Writers produced the subject matters and followed the norms and conventions dictated by Mainland China.⁹⁹ Although "cloak-and-dagger" novels were translated into Malay, along with fantastic stories, poems and historical novels when a renewal of interest in translations of Chinese novels surfaced in the Malay peninsula between 1930 and 1942, martial arts fiction as a literary genre could not be

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 636-37.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 637.

⁹⁹ Wang Gungwu, 'A Short introduction to Chinese Writings in Malaya', in *Bunga Emas: An Anthology of Contemporary Malaysian Literature 1930-1963*, ed. by T. Wignesana (Kuala Lumpur: Rayirath Raybooks, 1964), pp. 249-56.

considered popular among the Peranakans, judging from a study conducted by Claudine Salmon.¹⁰⁰ One could perhaps attribute this phenomenon to the Peranakans' having given up the use of spoken and written Chinese for a long time and turned to Malay instead. Martial arts novels translated during that period included *Fei jian er shi si xia* 《飛劍二十四俠》 [Twenty-four flying swordsmen], *Qi jian shi san xia* 《七劍十三俠》 [Seven swordsmen and thirteen knights-errant], *Yi zhi mei ping shan zei* 《一枝梅平山賊》 [The thief who leaves behind a plum flower after each job], and stories that portray "righters of wrongs and attackers of injustice."¹⁰¹

The Korean scholar in Chinese, Li Zhizhu 李致洙 gives a comprehensive account of translation and the influence of martial arts fiction in Korea in a Chinese article published in 1993.¹⁰² Chinese martial arts fiction grew popular in Korea only in the early 1960s. Its popularity, stemmed initially from works translated into Korean in earlier years, stimulated the creation of Korean martial arts fiction around 1978 and Korean martial arts poetry, as well as the development of cartoon strips in the 1980s.¹⁰³ Li attributes the wide popularity of Chinese martial arts fiction in Korea to four factors: firstly, Korea's long history of *yizei xiaoshuo* 義賊小說, stories of altruistic thieves, a literary genre closely resembling Chinese martial arts fiction, with stories centering on hero protagonists who try to help the needy and fight corrupt officials and ruffians relying on martial prowess; secondly, although Korea's geographical vicinity to China has long opened up the country to Chinese cultural

¹⁰⁰ Renewal of interest in translations of Chinese novels found in Salmon, 'Writings in Romanized Malay by the Chinese of Malaya: A Preliminary Inquiry', in *Literary Migrations*, pp. 462-64.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 463-64.

¹⁰² Li Zhizhu 李致洙, 'Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo zai Hanguo de fan yi jie shao yu ying xiang 中國武俠小說在韓國的翻譯介紹與影響' [Translation and influence of martial arts fiction in Korea], pp. 77-90. All references to martial arts fiction in Korean translations taken from this article.

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp. 84-89.

influence, including exposure to all literary forms in Chinese literature,¹⁰⁴ and yet the novel impact of martial arts fiction, a totally new genre, still could make its presence felt; thirdly, both the consideration of a modern commercial Korea that translation of martial arts fiction has not only benefitted newspapers as in Taiwan, but also radio stations and the movie industry, as well as the psychological need to find diversion from the gloomy political and economic situations during the eighties helped to perpetuate the genre in Korea; and finally, the showing of Hong Kong martial arts movies in Korea since 1967, the Bruce Lee 李小龍 fever in the 1970s, as well as the success of Jacky Chan 成龍 movies all helped to promote martial arts fiction in Korea.¹⁰⁵ Li divides translational activities of martial arts fiction in Korea into three periods, each marked by different emphases on translating.¹⁰⁶ The first period of Korean translation of martial arts fiction began with Yuichi Wen's 尉遲文 *Jian hai gu hong* 《劍海孤鴻》 [The orphan swordsman], translated by Jin Guangzhou 金光洲, and serialized as *Qing xia zhi* 《情俠誌》 [Romance of the knight-errant] on the *Jing Xiang News* 《京鄉新聞》 [Urban News] in 1961. Jin Guangzhou carried out most of the translation during this period, but the works serialized in the newspapers were confined only to minor writers. The second period saw avid translation of works by Taiwan martial arts novelists. Wolongsheng 臥龍生 almost came to represent Chinese martial arts fiction in 1968. Overseas Chinese were mostly responsible for translating the genre into Korean during this period as they could have access to materials serialized in the local Chinese newspapers. However, Korean martial arts fiction began to replace the waning translational activities in 1978 when readers began to lose interest in the stereotyped contents of translated works in the mid-seventies.¹⁰⁷ It was only in 1986 that translational activities saw a revival with the entry of Hong Kong top martial arts novelist Jin Yong into

¹⁰⁴ For Chinese influence on Korean fiction, see Kim Dong-uk, 'The Influence of Chinese Stories and Novels on Korean Fiction', trans. W.E. Skillend, in *Literary Migrations*, pp. 55-84 and A.F. Trotceovich, 'The Plots of Chinese Fiction in Korean Vernacular Novels', *ibid.*, pp. 85-105.

¹⁰⁵ Li Zhizhu 李致洙, pp. 78-79.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-84.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 84

the market. All his works, excepting '*Yue nu jian* 越女劍' [Sword of the Yue maiden], were completely translated within three years. Works by Liang Yusheng and Huanzhulouzhū were also in great demand. Hong Kong writers were translated most during this period, mainly by free-lancing graduate students or students who had studied in China. Li believes that only more serious translational efforts channelled into major works can help to revive the waning translational activities in Korea.¹⁰⁸ Korean martial arts novels stimulated by Chinese martial arts fiction resemble the innovatory literary genre in every respect, except that the authors are Koreans. Contentwise, the stories also take place in China, the hero fighters are martial artists from major Schools such as the Shaolin School or the Wudang School, resorting to the same kind of martial feats commonly deployed in Chinese novels.¹⁰⁹

Translated Martial Arts Fiction in Migration

To determine the extent to which martial arts novels translated into other Asian languages have migrated to the West, a survey of books written by the three major martial arts novelists Jin Yong 金庸, Liang Yusheng 梁羽生, and Gu Long 古龍 kept by eleven academic libraries in the U.S.A. was carried out on August 11, 1996. American libraries were chosen for this survey because an initial author search under "Jin Yong" carried out at the Library of Congress yielded a few Vietnamese translations of his works, suggesting that translations in other Asian languages could possibly be found in other libraries. To a researcher conversant only in English, a search in an English-speaking country with more Asian immigrants could prove more fruitful than in countries with fewer immigrants. The libraries surveyed included those that support universities with well-run programs in Chinese studies, namely, the libraries at the University of California, Columbia University, Cornell University, Harvard University, Indiana University, University of Michigan, Ohio University, Princeton University, University of Washington, University of Wisconsin-

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 87-88.

Madison, and Yale University, on the assumption that these libraries are more likely to stock martial arts fiction by major contemporary novelists than other libraries. Stanford should have been included on the list, but their OPAC on-line catalogue is for account holders only, making it impossible for outsiders to access their system. This survey shows that martial arts novels translated into other Asian languages were found in only six of the eleven libraries surveyed, although all libraries carry works written by major martial arts novelists, including crudely-printed unrevised earlier editions, plus some pirated copies, hastily prepared soon after the novel was serialized in the newspapers. Findings of this survey are tabulated as shown in Table 2.

	T R A N S L A T I O N S I N					
	Vietnamese		Indonesian		Korean	
	Jin Yong	Gu Long	Jin Yong	Gu Long	Jin Yong	Gu Long
Cornell University	60	12	6	0	0	0
U. of California	32	3	0	0	0	0
U. of Michigan	27	2	1	0	0	0
Yale University	4	1	0	0	0	0
U. of Wisconsin	0	0	2	0	0	0
Harvard University	0	0	0	0	4	0

Table 2 Martial Arts Novels, by Major Writers, Translated into Different Asian Languages Found in the Libraries of Six Universities in U.S.A.

The On-line Catalogues accessed show that Cornell University, the University of California, and the University of Michigan own the largest number of translations made from works by the three major writers surveyed, with Vietnamese versions topping the list,

and Indonesian outnumbering Korean. Most of the translations were made from Jin Yong's works, a few from Gu Long's, and none from Liang Yusheng's. Of the translations bearing the name Jin Yong as author, only a few could be identified as original translations of Jin Yong's works, the rest could either be translations or adaptations of Jin Yong's works retitled in Vietnamese or, as it may well be suspected, that some could be works written in Vietnamese with writers forging Jin Yong's name. Although the name of the publisher could be found, the date of publication was missing from most of the Vietnamese versions. With the exception of some translations that were brought out originally in Vietnam, mostly in the 1960s, with only a few in the early 1970s, most of the Vietnamese copies found in the libraries were published or reprinted in the U.S.A., beginning in the 1970s, but mostly during the 1980s when an exodus of Vietnamese, including the boat people, to the U.S.A. took place after Vietnam had come under Communist rule. Publishers engaged in bringing out Vietnamese translations in the States include Dai Nam, in Glendale, California; Vietnam, in Los Alamitos, California; Xuan Thu, in Houston, Texas; Song Moi, in Fort Smith, Arizona; and Xuan Thu, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Over half of the Vietnamese translations found under the author search "Jin Yong" were catalogued as being made from an unidentified Chinese original, while the remaining versions could be identified as translations of Jin Yong's *Fei hu wai zhuan* 《飛狐外傳》, *Xia ke xing* 《俠客行》, *Xiao ao jiang hu* 《笑傲江湖》, *Xue shan fei hu* 《雪山飛狐》, *Huang shan xia ke* 《黃山俠客》, *Yi tian tu long ji* 《倚天屠龍記》, *Lu ding ji* 《鹿鼎記》, *Lian cheng jue* 《連城訣》, *She diao ying xiong zhuan* 《射鵰英雄傳》, *Shen diao xia lu* 《神鵰俠侶》, *Su xin jian* 《素心劍》, and *Tian long ba bu* 《天龍八部》. Jin Yong's *Shu jian en chou lu* 《書劍恩仇錄》 and *Bi xue jian* 《碧血劍》 could not be identified from the Vietnamese translations found at the six libraries, nor at the Library of Congress. Again, over half of the Vietnamese translations found under the author search "Gu Long" were made from an unidentified Chinese original, while the remaining ones could be identified as his *Lu Xiaofeng* 《陸小鳳》, *Gu lou guai jie* 《古樓怪傑》, *Jian tong jiang hu* 《劍通江湖》, and *Hong pao guai ren* 《紅袍怪人》.

Further search for Vietnamese translations by subject under "martial arts fiction" in the Cornell University Catalogue shows that the library keeps two martial arts novels written originally in Vietnamese and one Vietnamese translation of a work by Zhuge Qingyun 諸葛青雲. Similar search at the University of Michigan yielded a Vietnamese translation of a work by Wolongsheng 臥龍生, plus another Vietnamese translation made from Chinese, but with no author's name given. Martial arts novels proper written by Jin Yong, Liang Yusheng, and Gu Long total over forty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. But of the only five books put under "martial arts fiction" in the University of Wisconsin-Madison, one even turned out to be J. Brian Pinkney's *Jojo's Flying Side Kick* (1995), a story for young readers, about how everyone gives Jojo advice on how to perform in order to earn her yellow belt in the tae kwon do class, but in the end she figures it out for herself.

This survey shows that the nine Indonesian translations found in Cornell University, the University of Michigan and the University of Wisconsin-Madison catalogues were made from Jin Yong's works, published in the 1960s, one published in Semarang and seven in Djakarta, Indonesia. Those that could be identified with their Chinese originals include Jin Yong's *Su xin jian* 《素心劍》, *Shen diao xia lu* 《神鵰俠侶》, *Bai ma xiao xi feng* 《白馬嘯西風》, and *Yi tian tu long ji* 《倚天屠龍記》. One would suspect that there might be more Indonesian translations made from Jin Yong's works as Suryadinata points out that martial arts novels were serialized in Indonesian newspapers under the names of the translators, or they were adaptations, which would render identification of the original titles difficult.¹¹⁰ He goes on to point out that publishers would only print the novels under the name of the original author if they proved extremely popular with readers, as in the case of Gu Lung.¹¹¹ Unfortunately, this study failed to locate in the eleven libraries surveyed any Indonesian translations under the name "Gu Long". This study shows that Cornell University seems to have the biggest collection of martial arts fiction written in Indonesian

¹¹⁰ Suryadinata, 'Postwar Kungfu Novels in Indonesia: A Preliminary Survey', p. 628.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 634.

as a keyword search under "silat" (kungfu novels in Indonesian) yielded 105 entries, and an author search under "Asmaraman S. Kho Ping Hoo 許平和", known for adapting martial arts fiction into Indonesian settings for indigenous readers, yielded 39 entries. A search under popular translators such as Oey Kim Tiang 黃金長 yielded 27 entries, which included translations of Liang Yusheng's *Lian jian feng yun lu* 《聯劍風雲錄》 (Djakarta, 1963) and Jin Yong's *Bai ma xiao xi feng* 《白馬嘯西風》 (Djakarta, 1963); Boe Beng Tjoe 無名子 (real name Oey An Siok 黃安淑) yielded 10 entries, which included Jin Yong's *Yi tian tu long ji* 《倚天屠龍記》 (Djakarta, 1963) and *Shen diao xia lu* 《神鵰俠侶》 (Djakarta, 1963); Chung Sin 忠心 yielded 9 entries; and Gan Kok Liang 顏國樑 yielded 12 entries, which included Jin Yong's *Su xin jian* 《素心劍》 (Semarang, 196?); and Tjan Ing Djiu 曾榮球 yielded nil entry, all known to have translated most of the works by Jin Yong, Gu Long, and Liang Yusheng.¹¹²

Four Korean translations of martial arts fiction were found in the Harvard University Catalogue, all made from Jin Yong's works, published in Seoul in the mid-eighties. They were all classified as historical fiction. One translation could be identified as Jin Yong's *Shu jian en chou lu* 《書劍恩仇錄》 (Seoul, 1986), the second as *Yi tian tu long ji* 《倚天屠龍記》 (Seoul, 1986), and the third as an abridged translation comprising three novels, *Yi tian tu long ji* 《倚天屠龍記》, *She diao ying xiong zhuan* 《射鵰英雄傳》, and *Shen diao xia lu* 《神鵰俠侶》 (Seoul, 1986-1987). The fourth one could not be identified although it was also catalogued as historical fiction by Jin Yong. Further search found another Korean translation made from Lin Li Chium's work, entitled *Sorimsa Koetcha*

¹¹² For Indonesian translations of works by Jin Yong, Gu Long, and Liang Yusheng, see appendix on the list of works by different translators, *ibid.*, pp. 641-50. Suryadinata was able to identify Indonesian translations made by Oey Kim Tiang and Boe Beng Tjoe in the Cornell University Catalogue, see pp. 639-40, notes 4 and 5.

Sunimdal: orini Chungguk muhyop sosol, a martial arts fiction for children which touches on Buddhism.¹¹³

Findings at the libraries in America could possibly suggest that a similar survey carried out by someone conversant in Dutch on libraries in the Netherlands, particularly the library at Leiden University, may yield Indonesian translations, or reprints of martial arts fiction produced in the former Dutch colony in the 1960s. And a similar survey by a researcher conversant in French on libraries in France would likely yield Vietnamese translations, or reprints of martial arts novels brought out in the former French Indo-China.

Manipulation in Translation as Rewriting

An examination of translational activities of martial arts novels in other Asian countries shows that in Indonesia and Korea, translations in the two target languages have functioned as an innovatory force in shaping a new literary genre in each country. In Korea, writers began to produce their own versions of martial arts novels in 1978, after the genre was first serialized in Korean translations in the early 1960s. Other literary innovations in Korea included presenting martial arts stories in poetry and in cartoons. In Indonesia, a new literary genre *cerita silat*, stimulated by Indonesian translations of Chinese martial arts fiction, appeared in the early 1930s,¹¹⁴ while the first *silat* film, *Delapan Djago Pedang*, possibly adapted from Lu Shi'e's 陸士諤 *Ba da jian xia* 《八大劍俠》 [The eight great swordsmen] came out in 1933 in the Dutch Indies.¹¹⁵ Literary innovations in both Korea and Indonesia seem to bear out the remarks made by Bassnett and Lefevere on what translation as rewriting can achieve in some cultures. According to Bassnett and Lefevere:

¹¹³ A Korean couple, Jong-Hwa Shin and his wife Kyong-Min Lee, both studying at Warwick University, were kind enough to help with deciphering information on the four Korean entries found in the Harvard University Catalogue.

¹¹⁴ Salmon, 'Malay Translations of Chinese Fiction in Indonesia', in *Literary Migrations*, p. 423 introduces this term as cloak-and-dagger novels written in Malay, the Malay equivalent for what is known as *wuxia* *xiaoshuo* 武俠小說 in Chinese. On pp. 436-37, note 33 traces the etymological origins of this term.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 437-38, note 37.

Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. All rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way. Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspect can help in the evolution of a literature and a society. Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices, and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another.¹¹⁶

While working as a diplomat, van Gulik took up writing Chinese detective stories as he needed something to balance off a post that entailed no significant permanence. Here, one could already see the writer manipulating the text to satisfy a personal need. He also manipulated the text to follow a formula that would appeal to a wide audience, as can be observed from a remark he made on *The Chinese Gold Murders* (1956): '[...]I had, at last found a formula that satisfied me, and probably would be acceptable also to Western and Asiatic readers.'¹¹⁷ He also made a similar remark on *The Red Pavilion* (1959), admitting: 'So I knew that in the New Series I had hit upon the right formula, and I set to work on a fourth volume, *The Emperor's Pearl*.'¹¹⁸ William Sarjeant would appear to make a similar observation as he surmises van Gulik's motive for re-writing:

As his translation proceeded, Robert van Gulik came to wonder why the Oriental readers of this century were so fond of poorly translated, third-rate thrillers from the West when their own ancient literature contained such interesting characters and plots. Would it be possible to recast some of these ancient stories into a modern mold, in a fashion that might please both Oriental readers, and at the same time, serve to introduce Oriental detective stories to a Western readership? He decided to try it. The formula proved successful¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, General Editors' preface in *Translation as Social Action*, ed. and trans. by Palma Zlateva (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. vii.

¹¹⁷ Robert Hans van Gulik, *Bibliography of Dr. R.H. van Gulik* (Boston: Boston University, 1970), p. 72a.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹¹⁹ William Antony S. Sarjeant, 'A Detective in Seventh-Century China: Robert van Gulik and the Cases of Judge Dee', *Armchair Detective*, 15.4 (1982), 292-304 (p.294).

In the translator's preface for *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee (Dee Goong An)*, van Gulik observes that given that Chinese detective stories have five main characteristics that are foreign to the Western public,¹²⁰ these crime novels are not very palatable to Western readers in general, and 'translating a Chinese detective novel for the general Western public implies re-writing it from beginning to end, and even then the pages of such a translation would be bristling with footnotes.'¹²¹ In the process of re-writing, van Gulik has to manipulate the text so that:

This novel conforms to our accustomed standards in that it does not reveal the criminal at the very beginning, lacks the more fantastic supernatural elements, has a limited number of dramatis personae, contains no material that is not germane to the plot, and is relatively short.¹²²

Otto Penzler, however, is inclined to find van Gulik's text manipulation falling short of perfection. He points out that 'in an attempt to appeal to more Western tastes, van Gulik altered the form sufficiently to maintain suspense throughout. Nonetheless, even in its altered state, the form is a difficult and complex one which does not appeal to every

¹²⁰ In the translator's preface, *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee* (New York: Dovers Publications, 1976), pp. ii-iii, van Gulik outlines five main characteristics of Chinese detective stories that are foreign to the Western public: firstly, the criminal, as well as his motive, are introduced at the beginning of the book; secondly, the Chinese love the supernatural; thirdly, the Chinese, as a leisurely people, show a passionate interest for detail; fourthly, the Chinese, with a good memory for names and a sixth sense for family relationships, like their novels well-populated, and fifthly, the Chinese hold different views as to what should be included in a detective novel, and what may well be left to the reader's imagination. Ma Yau-woon, in his 'Themes and Characterization in the *Lung-t'u kung-an*', *T'oung Pao*, 59 (1973), 179-202, seems to echo van Gulik when he points out, although *gongan* fiction and Western detective and mystery fiction do share certain features, the 'didactic teachings, interventions of the supernatural, and solutions reached by coincidence' found in the former constitute 'the three most forbidden taboos in Western detective literature', not to mention that logical detection of crimes are not absolutely essential in the *gongan* fiction (p. 179). Bleiler's English translation of Tadeusz Zbikowski's preface to *Sprawiedliwe wyroki sedziego Pao-Kunga* (Warsaw, 1960) also points out that one great difference between Western detective story and the Chinese one is that the former has as its hero a private detective or a lawyer whereas the latter a member of the judiciary, a judge (p.344); two other differences are that the whole crime, with causes and motivations, is presented at the beginning of the Chinese detective story; and the didactic element is much stronger in the Chinese genre (p. 345).

¹²¹ Van Gulik, *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee*, pp. iv-v.

¹²² Ibid., p. v.

taste.'¹²³ Penzler's critical comment on the altered form may perhaps be explicated by Sarjeant's apt remark that 'Robert took pains to present his stories in ways which would conform with classical Chinese styles and observe Chinese conventions.'¹²⁴

As a text-manipulator, van Gulik also tampered with the characters in his novels. He reduced the plot from twenty-seven characters in his first novel *The Chinese Bell Murders* (1949) to only twelve in *The Haunted Monastery* (1959) by leaving Judge Dee with only one lieutenant, Tao Gan, instead of the usual four. But response from his readers caused van Gulik again to manipulate the text in a different direction, as the writer recounts:

Many readers had written me that they regretted the liquidation of Sergeant Hoong, others wanted more of Judge Dee's family life. Therefore I introduced into this novel [*The Phantom of the Temple* (1965)] two of Judge Dee's Lieutenants viz. Sergeant Hoong and Ma Joong, and I devoted some space to Judge Dee's three wives.¹²⁵

Van Gulik's novels are graced with illustrations drawn by the author, sometimes with reproductions of original Chinese pictures. Nudes often feature in his novels. The author claimed that it was not his intention to include nudes in the plates, explaining that: 'Since in post-war Japan there had arisen a "Cult of the Nude", the publisher insisted on my including a female nude in the cover design [...].'¹²⁶ Van Gulik's experience is one example of how a rewriting is subject to 'a control mechanism which regulates and often manipulates,' which Theo Herman refers to as patronage.¹²⁷ The control exercised by the publisher as one influence of patronage is evident here. Lefevere considers ideology,

¹²³ Otto Penzler, 'Collectiong Mystery Fiction: Robert van Gulik', *Armchair Detective*, 28.3 (1995), 276-83 (p.276).

¹²⁴ Sarjeant, p. 294.

¹²⁵ A remark on *The Phantom of the Temple* (1965), in *Bibliography of Dr. R.H. van Gulik*, p. 78.

¹²⁶ A remark on *The Chinese Maze Murders* (1950), *ibid.*, p. 72.

¹²⁷ Theo Hermans, ed., *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation* (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1985), p. 14.

economics and status as the three areas of the influence of patronage.¹²⁸ Van Gulik's effort at producing Chinese detective stories in English, stories based on original plots from the *gongan* 公案 [public cases] genre, forerunner of modern martial arts fiction according to Ma Yau-woon, is one example of how literature in general and translation in particular can be manipulated for a particular purpose. In *Translating, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992), André Lefevere considers each translation as a rewriting. According to him, 'Rewriting manipulates, and it is effective.'¹²⁹ In *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation* (1985), Theo Hermans outlines the common factors of the Manipulation group as being 'a view of literature as a complex and dynamic system; a conviction that there should be continual interplay between theoretical models and practical case studies; an approach to literary translation which is target-oriented, functional and systemic; and an interest in the norms and constraints that govern the production and reception of translations.'¹³⁰ He further observes, 'From the point of view of the target literature, all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose.'¹³¹ Van Gulik's Judge Dee series as a type of rewriting from Chinese into English and their subsequent re-translations into other Asian, European, and Middle Eastern languages shows how a genre from one literary polysystem can be introduced into other literary polysystems of other cultures, in the process of which, both van Gulik and the Judge Dee series he created from original Chinese plots crossed not only yet more national boundaries, but also more linguistic and cultural ones, as Lefevere rightly observes, 'Since translation is the most obviously recognizable type of rewriting, and since it is potentially the most influential because it is able to project the image of an author and/or a (series of)

¹²⁸ André Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 16.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹³⁰ Hermans, *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, pp. 10-11.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

work(s) in another culture, lifting that author and/or those works beyond the boundaries of their culture of origins.'¹³²

In Cambodia, the translation of martial arts fiction into Cambodian is an example of appropriating an element in a foreign genre for inspiring nationalism. The late 1950s and early 1960s saw the softening of resistance against Chinese culture. Kungfu movies from Hong Kong began to invade the Cambodian market, lending a major source of support for Chinese influence. In an atmosphere of crisis when traditional values and recognized institutions eventually collapsed after the late 1960s, Cambodians unwittingly sought answer not only from the ultra "left" trend of thought in Chinese literature found during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, but also the rough justice of martial arts fiction in which people living on the edge of society can redress the wrongs sown by the establishment.¹³³ Nepote and Khing wonder if 'this literature of combat, in which the Chinese often fight Foreigners and Oppressors (such as Manchus, Huns and Westerners) did not provide the Cambodians with models of nationalism that they could not find in their own literature.'¹³⁴

Translation of martial arts fiction, a genre steeped in Chinese culture and history, would entail a careful examination of the cultural contexts in which the story is set. Of equal importance is an examination of how recurrent key terms are embedded in the novel. Bassnett draws an analogy between the relationships of language, culture, and the translator in her *Translation Studies* (1991): 'In the same way that the surgeon, operating on the heart, cannot neglect the body that surrounds it, so the translator treats the text in isolation from the culture at his peril.'¹³⁵ The cultural term, *xia* 俠, a recurrent theme word in martial arts

¹³² Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, p. 9.

¹³³ Jacques Nepote and Hoc Dy Khing, 'Chinese Literary Influence on Cambodia in the 19th and 20th Centuries', in *Literary Migrations*, pp. 321-72 (p. 345).

¹³⁴ Ibid., pp. 345-46.

¹³⁵ Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, rev. edn. (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 14.

fiction, will be taken up in the next chapter to illustrate the intricate relationships between language, culture, and the translator, demonstrating at the same time, one of the complexities involved in translating martial arts fiction into English.

Chapter Five

Xia as a Cultural Concept in Translation

Xia 俠, which appears as a recurring term in Chinese martial arts fiction down the ages, is a cultural concept that has been much discussed in works on Chinese history and literature,¹ and may still be found in works on Chinese philosophy.² Here, the intention is not to provide a full description of what *xia* is; the discussion will be confined to how the term *xia* has been interpreted and translated by different scholars or sinologists in the past. Translators have resorted to different translations for *xia* and its variants, such as *youxia* 游

¹ See Lao Gan 勞幹, 'Lun Han dai de you xia 論漢代的游俠 [On *youxia* of the Han period]', *Wen shi zhe xue bao* 《文史哲學報》, 1 (1950), 237-52 and Tatsuo Masubuchi, 'The Yu Hsia 游俠 and the Social Order in the Han Period', *Annals of the Hitotsubashi Academy*, 3.2 (1952), 84-101 for treatment of the *xia* as a distinct social group in the Han period. One of the earliest works which discusses *xia* in both Chinese history and literature is James J.Y. Liu's *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, as Liu traces *xia* as a social and cultural phenomenon in Chinese history and how *xia*, both as a cultural and philosophical concept, found expression in different literary genres in Chinese literature down the ages. James J.Y. Liu's study is divided into four sections, namely, history, poetry, fiction, and drama, plus a conclusion. He treats each section in a chronological order. However, the *huaben* 話本 literature, i.e. story-tellers' texts, which are rich in stories on the Chinese knights-errant, are not included in his fiction section. Ma Yau-woon fills this gap in his article 'The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* Stories', *T'oung Pao*, 61.4-5 (1975), 266-300. Of particular interest is Sima Qian's Chapter 124, 'The Biographies of the Wandering Knights' in the *Records of the Grand Historian of China*, translated from the *Shi ji* 《史記》 by Burton Watson, 2 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961) II, 452-61. For *youxia* as a power group in the Han Dynasty, see Ch'ü T'ung-tsu, *Han Social Structure*, ed. by Jack L. Dull (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972), pp. 185-95, 245-47. More recent works on the topic *xia* include Cui Fengyuan 崔奉源, *Zhongguo gu dian duan pian xia yi xiao shuo yan jiu* 《中國古典短篇俠義小說研究》 [A study of classical short stories of knight-errantry] (Taipei: Lianjing chubanshiye gongsi, 1986), see definitions of *xia* (pp. 1-29), origins of *xia* (pp. 30-39), and the image of *xia* in fiction (pp. 147-93); Luo Liqun 羅立群, *Zhongguo wu xia xiao shuo shi* 《中國武俠小說史》 [History of Chinese martial arts fiction] (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1990), pp. 2-13, 32-33; Chen Shan 陳山, *Zhongguo wu xia shi* 《中國武俠史》 [A history of Chinese knight-errantry] (Shanghai: Sanlian shudian, 1992); Chen Pingyuan 陳平原, *Qian gu wen ren xia ke meng -- wu xia xiao shuo lei xing yan jiu* 《千古文人俠客夢 - 武俠小說類型研究》 [Chivalric dreams of the literati down the ages -- a genre study of martial arts fiction] (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1992), pp. 1-41; Han Yunbo 韓雲波, 'Lun xia yu xia wen xue de hao xiong te zheng -- Zhongguo xia wen hua xing tai zhi er 論俠與俠文學的豪雄特征 -- 中國俠文化形態之二 [A discourse on the heroic characteristics of *xia* and *xia* literature -- patterns of Chinese *xia* culture, no. 2]', *Tian fu xin lun* 《天府新論》, 1 (1993), 73-77; Department of Chinese, Tamkang University, ed. *Xia yu Zhongguo wen hua* 《俠與中國文化》 [*Xia* and Chinese culture] (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shudian, 1993); Cao Zhengwen 曹正文, *Zhongguo xia wen hua shi* 《中國俠文化史》 [A cultural history of Chinese knights-errant] (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1994), pp. 1-57; Han Yunbo 韓雲波, 'Xia de wen hua nei han yu wen hua mo shi 俠的文化內涵與文化模式 [Cultural content and model of *xia*]', *Xi nan shi fan da xue xue bao* 《西南師範大學學報》, 2 (1994), 91- 96; and Zhang Zhihe 張志和 and Zheng Chunyuan 鄭春元, *Zhongguo wen shi zhong de xia ke* 《中國文史中的俠客》 [Knights-errant in Chinese history and literature] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1994).

² Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, ed. by Derk Bodde (New York: The Free Press, 1948), pp. 50-53, 59.

俠, *xiake* 俠客, *renxia* 任俠, *qingxia* 輕俠, *xiashi* 俠士, *yixia* 義俠, *haoxia* 豪俠, and *wuxia* 武俠, in order to convey to readers the essential qualities embodied in the term and its variants in question. The following table shows how different scholars and sinologists have translated the term *xia* and its variants into English.

Scholar	Year	Translated Term for <i>Xia</i> and Its Variants
Fung Yu-lan *	1948	knights-errant / <i>hsieh</i> [<i>xia</i>]
Tatsuo Masubuchi	1952	<i>yu hsia</i> [<i>youxia</i>]
John L. Bishop	1956	knights-errant / righters-of-wrongs
Yang Lien-sheng	1957	knights-errant
Robert Ruhlmann	1960	adventurers / wandering adventurers / swordsmen / <i>xia</i>
Burton Watson	1961	wandering knights
Ho Ping-ti	1963	underworld stalwarts / underworld leaders / underground chivalry / underground activities
James J. Y. Liu	1967	Chinese knights-errant / chivalry
Endymion Wilkinson	1967	noble outlaws / honest thieves
Ch'ü T'ung-tsu	1972	redresser-of-wrongs / <i>hsia</i> [<i>xia</i>] / <i>yu-hsia</i> [<i>youxia</i>]
Ma Yau-woon	1975	knights-errant
Susan R. Blader	1977	heroes (Ruhlmann's swordsmen)
Raymond Dawson	1978	knights-errant
Ma Yau-woon and Joseph S.M. Lau	1978	knights-errant
Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang	1979	gallant citizens
Robert E. Hegel	1981	swordsmen / knights-errant
Perry E. Link	1981	knights-errant

* Fung's choices are those of his translator Derk Bodde.

Table 3. Translations of the Term *Xia* and Its Variants by Different Scholars

One of the most commonly translated terms adopted by sinologists since Giles is "knight-errant".³ Back in 1948, Fung Yu-lan 馮友蘭, writing as a Chinese philosopher, in tracing the social background of the Mohist School, in *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, to hereditary warriors, former military specialists to kings, princes, and feudal lords during the feudal age of the Zhou Dynasty (?1027-771 BC)⁴ suggested that the terms for this class of people, warrior specialists who lost their positions and titles after the disintegration of feudalism which took place in the latter part of the Zhou Dynasty, known as the *xia* or *youxia*, can be translated as "knight-errant".⁵ Despite his own suggestion, Fung still resorts to using the transliterated term *xia* for the key cultural term throughout his discussion, confining the translated term "knight-errant" only to the beginning when the cultural concept *xia* is introduced for the first time (p. 50), and immediately in the next paragraph in the conjoined form "*hsieh [xia]* or knights-errant" (p. 50). It could be argued that he intended to remind his readers that *xia* could be taken to mean "knights-errant" in a broad sense as well as to signal to them that *xia* would appear as a transliterated term in its own right in the text to follow. After a lapse of over a page, he re-introduces the translated term "knight-errant" on its own (p. 52), perhaps to help readers to re-activate their association of the term in question, but quickly switching back to "*hsieh [xia]*" in the immediate next

³ Scholars or sinologists who translated the term *xia* and its variants in Chinese history or literature as "knight-errant" include Fung Yu-lan, pp. 50, 52, 53, and 59, but he keeps to the transliterated term *hsieh[xia]* throughout the text; John L. Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China (A Study of the San-yen collection)*, p. 35, but he also uses "righter-of-wrongs" for its variant *xiake*; Yang Lien-sheng, 'The Concept of "Pao" as a Basis for Social Relations in China', in *Chinese Thought and Institutions*, ed. by John K. Fairbank (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 291-309 (p. 294); James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*; Arthur Waley as pointed out by James J.Y. Liu in his 'Rejoinder to Endymion Wilkinson's Review of *The Chinese Knight-errant*', *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association*, 3.1 (1968), 36-37 (p. 36); Ma Yau-woon, 'The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* Stories', pp. 266-69; and Ma Yau-woon and Joseph S.M. Lau who explain the term "knight-errant" in the book co-edited by them, *Traditional Chinese Stories: Themes and Variations*, p. 39. Robert E. Hegel also adopts the term "knight-errant", but using the terms "swordsman" and "knight-errant" interchangeably, contrasting them with "stalwart" or "outstanding man", in *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), pp. 130-39.

⁴ The Zhou Dynasty (?1027 - 256 BC) is divided into three ruling periods whose dates somehow overlapped, namely, the Western Zhou (?1027 - 771), the Spring and Autumn era (722 - 481 BC) and the Warring States era (403 - 221 BC). During the Spring and Autumn era and the Warring States era, the authority was divided between virtually independent feudal states.

⁵ Fung, p. 50.

occurrence, separated though by only one sentence. It would appear, too, that another strategy adopted by Fung in inculcating this alien *xia* cultural, albeit philosophical concept, into the minds of his readers, again after a lapse of over a page, is adopting another conjoined variant "*hsieh [xia]* (knights-errant)" (p. 53). Judging from his consistent pattern in choosing the transliterated term *xia* to exemplify the central core of the Mohist philosophy, coupled by his deliberated, yet not uncalculated working of the so-called translated term "knight-errant" into his text for explication, one could perhaps surmise that although Fung may have been inclined to make his text as much target-oriented and acceptable to Western readers, he might still believe that this key cultural concept of *xia*, so far removed in time and space, would fail to come across relying on the sole choice of one seemingly close English term. The translation of *xia* into "knight-errant", though possible, at best, could serve as an aid to interpreting its meaning. Transliterating the term in context was for Fung, the optimal solution, ensuring that this value-laden concept term would come across.

After explaining how the *xia* or knights-errant, who originally started out as military specialists in the employ of the aristocratic houses and were themselves members of the upper classes, came to be recruited, in later times, more frequently from the lower classes, Fung focuses on their professionalism, pointing out how the professional ethics of their own social class constituted the central core of the Mohist philosophy. Concerning their professional ethics, Fung concurs with what Sima Qian 司馬遷, Grand Historian of the Han Dynasty, put down in his *Shi ji* 《史記》, the Historical Records:

Though their actions may not conform to perfect righteousness, yet they are always true to their word. What they undertake they invariably fulfill; what they have promised they invariably carry out. Without thinking of themselves they hasten to the side of those who are in trouble, whether it means survival or destruction, life or death. Yet they never boast of their accomplishments but rather consider it a disgrace to brag of what they have done for others. So there is much about them

which is worthy of admiration, particularly when trouble is something that comes to almost everyone some time.⁶

Fung provides evidence for the inference that Mo Tzu and his followers sprang from the *xia*, pointing out that a large part of Mo Tzu's 墨子 teaching was an extension of the professional ethics of this class of people. Fung believes that a central concept in Mo Tzu's philosophy is that *ren* 仁 (human-heartedness) and *yi* 義 (righteousness) signify an all-embracing love, as he remarks later:

This concept [all-embracing love] is a central one in Mo Tzu's philosophy, and represents a logical extension of the professional ethics of the class of *hsieh* [*xia*] (knights-errant) from which Mo Tzu sprang. This ethics was, namely, that within their group the *hsieh* [*xia*] "enjoy equally and suffer equally." (This was a common saying of the *hsieh* [*xia*] of later times.) Taking this group concept as a basis, Mo Tzu tried to broaden it by preaching the doctrine that everyone in the world should love everyone else equally and without discrimination.⁷

Fung also points out that in the Mohist political theory on the state, as Mo Tzu argued that the state must be totalitarian and the authority of its ruler absolute, one may see 'Mo Tzu's development of the professional ethics of the *hsieh* [*xia*], with its emphasis upon group obedience and discipline.'⁸ Fung, as a Chinese philosopher, depicts the *xia* as a social class resulting from the disintegration of feudalism in the latter part of the Zhou Dynasty, whose professional ethics came to influence the Mohist School in China. This study seems to indicate that Fung is the only person adhering to this view.

On the affiliation of the *xia* with the Mohist School and its subsequent influence on Mohist philosophy, Lao Gan 勞幹, however, argues that there is no evidence to suggest that Mo Tzu and his followers sprang from the *xia*, as the *xia* had been rejected by both Confucians

⁶ Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian of China*, 2 vols, trans. by Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961) I, 453. The first half of Sima Qian's words, rendered differently, are quoted in Fung, p. 50.

⁷ Fung, p. 53.

⁸ Ibid, p. 59.

and Mohists in history.⁹ This explains why there were no official records on the *xia* after the Han period. Lao continues to point out that the "romantic" endeavours of the *xia*, prompted by their impetuosity and non-conformity, therefore could neither accord with the Confucians nor the Mohists, but could only accord with the Taoists.¹⁰ To Lao, a genuine *xia* was one whose action should be devoid of ulterior motives for wealth and enjoyment; his action should stem out of an urge to offer help to the needy, to fulfill his promise, and not to shirk his responsibility in times of trouble.¹¹

Tatsuo Masubuchi, an economic historian who studied the *youxia* of the Han period adopting a sociological viewpoint, as distinct from the ethical one adopted by Sima Qian, the Grand Historian, distinguishes the virtuous from the vicious among the *youxia*. Masubuchi argues that 'the *youxia* were regarded as protectors of peace by people connected with them, but as lawless and tough gangs by the people outside their circle', explaining why Sima Qian highly admired the chivalrous temperament -- the *renxia* 任俠 spirit -- of the *youxia* as a valuable factor in maintaining the social order based on people's sentiment while Ban Gu 班固, a historian upholding the State authority, condemned Sima Qian and criticized the *youxia* unfavourably as disturbers of State law and regarded them as outlaws in *Han shu* 《漢書》, the History of Western Han Dynasty.¹² Masubuchi concludes that they represented but two different aspects of the same *youxia*.

Unlike Fung Yu-lan who suggests that the *xia* were themselves from the upper classes, Masubuchi concurs with Sima Qian that the *youxia* were 'plebeian heroes, who, being endowed with physical and moral courage, protected the people from dangers at the risk of

⁹ Lao Gan 勞幹, p. 241.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 249.

¹² Masubuchi, p. 84

their lives.'¹³ Like Fung Yu-lan the Chinese philosopher, Masubuchi also uses the transliterated term *yu hsia* [*youxia*] throughout his article, only after inserting the original Chinese term in the title of his article "The Yu Hsia 游俠 and the Social Order in the Han Period" (1952) before moving into his main text. Two reasons seem to suggest why transliteration alone would suffice in this case. Firstly, Masubuchi's article was intended for a specialized group who profess an academic interest in the economic history of the Han period. It may safely be assumed that the readers were already familiar with the term in question. Secondly, Masubuchi discusses at length the manifestation of the *renxia* spirit among the different *youxia* groups, be they nobles or plebeians attached to them; or be they young, violent and lawless *youxia* called *qingxia* 輕俠 or powerful *youxia* called *haoxia* 豪俠 who were eminent in the *renxia* spirit and attracted a large number of clients by their personalities. Thus, the article itself could serve as a detailed, albeit comprehensive, exploration of the transliterated term in question, enriched by the socio-political and cultural and historical context of the term under discussion.

In his book *The Colloquial Short Story in China (A Study of the San-Yen Collection)*, brought out in 1956, John L. Bishop, commenting on tales of chivalry and adventure found in the *san yan* 三言 collection in traditional Chinese literature, illustrates as an example the following:

Li, Duke of Ch'ien in Straits Meets a Knight-errant" (*HSHY* 30) is laid in the T'ang period and tells of revenging a treachery through the agency of a *hsia-k'e* 俠客 or professional "righter-of-wrongs" possessed of magical powers.¹⁴

In the above short example, Bishop uses a total of four different terms -- knight-errant, *hsia-k'e*, 俠客, and "righter-of-wrongs" to get across to Western readers the meaning of "*xiake*", a variant of *xia*, in question. Perhaps, one may infer that the helplessness felt by the translator wrestling with the indeterminant choice for *xia* could be quite unnerving, as

¹³ Ibid., p. 84.

¹⁴ Bishop, *The Colloquial Short Story in China*, p. 35.

evidenced by the various translational strategies resorted to in the end, namely, adopting "knight-errant", an approximate equivalent, albeit convenient label, from the West; using the transliterated form "*hsia-k'e*"; supplementing the term in question with the Chinese characters "俠客" found in the original version; and finally paraphrasing the term, albeit explicating or expanding it into a wordy phrase, as "professional 'righter-of-wrongs' possessed of magical powers". The various terms or phrases adopted in explicating the cultural term *xiake* may betray, too, the insecurity Bishop felt in handling this particular Chinese term. It could also be inferred that Bishop, finding the inadequacy of any one single term in English to capture the full meaning of *xiake*, had but to resort to different means to tackle the problem if his intention was to make the term more accessible to Western readers.

Like Fung Yu-lan the Chinese philosopher and John L. Bishop before him, Yang Lien-sheng 楊聯陞, as a Chinese historian, also uses the translated term "knight-errant" for the *xia* or *youxia* who appeared later in Chinese history, in the Warring States era. The data included in this study, or collected so far, would seem to indicate that after Fung Yu-lan, the Chinese philosopher who suggests that the terms for the class of people known as the *xia* or *youxia* found in the latter part of the Zhou Dynasty can both be translated as "knight-errant" and John L. Bishop who uses "knight-errant" for *xia* and "righter-of-wrongs" for its variant *xiake*, Yang Lien-sheng is among one of the earliest few who rendered the *xia* in Chinese history as "knight-errant" and consistently adopted this term throughout his texts.¹⁵ Although he did not explain how and why he adopted this term, Yang may have lifted this term direct from Fung, whose work on the social background of the Mohist School had been consulted by Yang.¹⁶ In fact, a closer study also reveals that the *xia* or *youxia* discussed by both Fung and Yang refer to essentially the same class of people in

¹⁵ Yang, 'The Concept of "Pao" as a Basis for Social Relations in China', p. 294 and his review article 'James J.Y. Liu: The Chinese Knight-errant', *The Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, 7.1 (1968), 284-88.

¹⁶ Fung Yu-lan, p. 50, quoted in Yang, 'The Concept of "Pao" as a Basis for Social Relations in China', p. 294.

history, for on the origins of Chinese "knights-errant" and what they set out for life, Yang introduces them as follows:

These people were first recognized as a group during the period of the Warring States. At that time, the old feudal order had disintegrated, and many hereditary warriors had lost their positions and titles. As brave and upright individuals, and joined by strong sons of lower origin, they scattered throughout the country and made a living by offering their services (and even their lives) to anyone who could afford to employ them.¹⁷

Thus, one can see that the Chinese knights-errant evolved as a distinct social group in the Warring States period (403-221 BC) when the old order of ruling broke down. These people, originally hereditary warriors, personages boasting of an upright character and professional military training, and formerly in the employment of princes or noble families were forced to scatter around the country selling their services to those who would hire them. Reduced to straitened circumstances in life, they eventually found themselves mixing with people from more humble origins.

Commenting on their qualities and professionalism, Yang remarks that 'the knights-errant were distinguished by their absolute reliability, which was their professional virtue',¹⁸ reiterating that they were ready to pledge their support to people who appreciated them, righting wrongs and seeking revenge for their friends. They would even repay those who appreciated them with their lives. They took the law into their own hands, and it was only after China became unified under Qin and Han that attempts were made to check the activities of the knights-errant. The chivalrous spirit of the ancient knights-errant, however continued to live on and even came to flourish in later periods.¹⁹

¹⁷ Yang, 'The Concept of "Pao" as a Basis for Social Relations in China', p. 294. See also James J.Y. Liu's *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, Chapter 1, pp. 1-80, which traces the rise of the ancient Chinese knights-errant, their suppression, and their eventual decline in Chinese history. Included in his discussion are their social origins, ideological bases of their behaviour, and examples of knights-errant drawn from different periods in Chinese history.

¹⁸ Yang, 'The Concept of "Pao" as a Basis for Social Relations in China', p. 294.

¹⁹ For historical accounts on *xia* or *xia* activities in later periods, see Chü, *Han Social Structure*, pp. 185-95, 245-47.

In 1968, eleven years after his first adopting the term "knight-errant" for *xia*, in his review article "James J.Y. Liu: The Chinese Knight-errant", Yang further explains what *xia* is and suggests that the *xia* in China be considered as "free-floating resources" of the society, a concept put forward by S.N. Eisenstadt in his book *The Political Systems of Empires -- The Rise and Fall of the Historical Bureaucratic Societies*.²⁰ Despite his own suggestion, Yang has not modified or expanded his translated term to incorporate this additional sense of the meaning for *xia* in his text, still sticking only to the use of "knight-errant" throughout the text.

James J.Y. Liu would appear to have popularized the use of the translated term "Chinese knight-errant" for historical *xia* and idealized fictional *xia* in different literary genres of Chinese literature in his book *The Chinese Knight-Errant* (1967), which is an attempt at a comprehensive study of the tradition of knight-errantry in Chinese history and literature from the fourth century BC to modern times.

Before applying the term "knight-errant" for the *xia* in Chinese history and literature, Liu endeavoured to explain to his readers in the introductory section of his book, what this term means and also how he applies it:

A word of explanation may be needed on the use of the word "knight-errant". The Chinese term thus translated is *yu-hsia* [*youxia*] or simply *hsia* [*xia*] (in modern Pekinese pronunciation). *Yu* [*you*] means "wandering", and *hsia* [*xia*] (earlier pronunciation *hsieh* [*xie*]) is etymologically cognate with the verb *hsieh* [*xie*], "to force" or "to coerce". The term is applied to the kind of men who roamed around the country and used force to right wrongs. By calling them "knights-errant" I do not imply that they resembled the medieval European knights in every way; what they were like and how they differed from the Western knights it will indeed be part of my task to show. Meanwhile, the reader is asked to accept the term "knight-

²⁰ S.N. Eisenstadt, *The Political Systems of Empires -- The Rise and Fall of the Historical Bureaucratic Societies* (New York and London: Press of Glencoe, Collier Macmillan, 1963), quoted in Yang, p. 287.

errant" as a matter of convenience, for this is literally close enough to the original and seems to me by far the least misleading of several translations.²¹

Liu argues why he found other translations of the term which include "cavalier", "adventurer", "soldier of fortune", and "underworld stalwarts" misleading for 'the first carried courtly associations irrelevant to the *hsia* [*xia*], while the others suggest mercenary motives which the *hsia* [*xia*] did not have.'²² Neither does he see transliteration as a possible solution to the translation problem confronting him for he further argues:

No doubt some of the men and actions to be described in the following pages will strike many a Western reader as far from being chivalrous, but it would be extremely awkward if I were to use the transliteration *hsia* [*xia*] throughout the book or use inverted commas every time I mention the word "knight-errant" or "chivalrous". After all, translations are but approximations, even with such common words as "gentlemanly" or "beautiful": the qualities denoted by these English words may be quite different from those conveyed by their correlatives in Chinese, yet we cannot help using these words in translation.²³

Liu also makes it very clear to his readers: 'Thus, when I write "knight-errantry", "chivalrous", etc., they are to be understood to mean "what the Chinese call knight-errantry", "what is (or was) considered chivalrous in China", etc.'²⁴ Liu could have committed a tautological fallacy here. He stresses that the term "knight-errant" is never an equivalent for the *xia* in Chinese society and that there exist certain basic differences between the Chinese *xia* and the Western knights. Yet, in the end, he urges readers to accept the usage "Chinese knight-errant" for the *xia* in China. It would seem that Liu might have believed that his adding "Chinese" to "knight-errant" would wield the magical power of rendering the *xia* instantly accessible to the Western mind, without having explained to his readers that the term *xia* is a Chinese character imbued with rich connotations acquired over two millennia.

²¹ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, p. xii.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

When challenged as to the validity of his using the term "Chinese knight-errant" for the Chinese term *youxia*²⁵ by Endymion Wilkinson²⁶, James J.Y. Liu defends himself as follows:

About my translation of the term *yu-hsia* [*youxia*] as "knight-errant": of course I was aware that this English term is not the exact equivalent of the original, and I took some pains to point out that I was using it merely as a convenient label and that the concept of *hsia* [*xia*] differed from that of "knight-errantry" in various ways. I could have taken the easy way out by transliterating, but I chose not to, so as not to baffle readers who may not know Chinese. As a matter of convention, the term "knight-errant" has been used as translation for *hsia* [*xia*] by Arthur Waley and by Professor Lien-sheng Yang, among others. The other possible translations of the term are even less suitable than "knight-errant".²⁷

Judging from the defense Liu used to ward off this attack, one could say that the author, mindful of the basic difference between *xia* as a Chinese cultural concept and "knight-errantry" as an English term with a medieval European ring to it, was not unaware of other alternatives open, including the possible alternative of solving the translation problem by resorting to the easiest way out by simply transliterating the term. What seems to have transpired is that he may have explored other alternatives, then weighed them against an earlier version suggested by Arthur Waley and by Yang Lien-sheng before settling for the term "knight-errant". What also emerges from the above argument is that the author had also considered his target readership before deciding on "knight-errant" as a convenient label for a general readership for whom his book was intended, apart from the specialists.

²⁵ *Youxia* literally means a travelling or wandering knight-errant. Burton Watson translated this term into "wandering knights" in Chapter 124 "The Biographies of the Wandering Knights", in *Records of the Grand Historian of China* by Sima Qian, 2 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), pp. 452-61.

²⁶ See Endymion Wilkinson's review article '*The Chinese Knight-Errant* by James J.Y. Liu', *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association*, 2.3 (1967), 112-13.

²⁷ James J.Y. Liu, 'Rejoinder to Endymion Wilkinson's Review of *The Chinese Knight-Errant* ', *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association*, 3.1 (1968), 36-37 (p. 36).

In anticipation of readers' questions over the justification of the application of the term "knight-errant" to the panoply of characters, real or fictitious, in *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, Liu stresses that 'there are in fact certain common denominators among those who have been graced with the appellation, such as their sense of justice, their loyalty to friends, their courage, and their impetuosity.'²⁸ He also subscribes to the view that:

Historically, knight-errantry is a manifestation of the spirit of revolt and nonconformity in traditional Chinese society, sometimes lying underground and sometimes erupting to the surface. Its ideals are admirable, though these have not always been realized in practice, and may have even provided excuses for mere lawlessness. It is further possible that the ideals of knight-errantry inspired the moral codes of secret societies of a subversive kind.²⁹

Liu points out that knight-errantry was a form of expression of the spirit of protest and nonconformity in China, with its origins rooted in history. In spite of the basic differences between the European and the Chinese knights, particularly regarding social status and religious sanction,³⁰ knights in medieval Europe and China did share certain common ideals, as Liu rightfully observes:

In fact, most of the ideals of Chinese chivalry were such as a Western knight would have readily subscribed to. It will be recalled that among the chief ideals of the Chinese knights were altruism and justice, especially with regard to the poor and oppressed. The Western knights, too, were expected to uphold justice and unselfishly protect the poor and the weak [...]. Further, the Chinese knights aimed at high courage and fame, preferring death to dishonour; so did the Western ones. The former were generous and regarded wealth with contempt; the latter also esteemed generosity, to the extent that *largesse* was considered by some the chief virtue of noble knights. Finally, the Chinese knights stressed mutual faith and truthfulness; the European knights were told that "fals swerynge and vntrewe othe

²⁸ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, p. 193.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ A comparison between the Chinese and the Western knights is given in James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, pp. 195-97; the similarities and differences between the historical Chinese and European knights as reflected in literature are found on pp. 198-207.

be not in them that mayntene thordre of chyualrye".³¹ All these ideals shared by the knights Chinese and European represent universal human aspirations and create a spiritual bond between them across space and time and despite their differences.³²

Backed by this logical reasoning, Liu reiterates that the use of the words "knights" and "chivalry" for *xia* and its variants throughout his book is therefore not without some justification. After informing his readers that he was aware of the differences between medieval European knights and Chinese knights as well as convincing them of his justification in using the term "knight-errant", Liu might still be guilty of not having pinned down the definition of "knight-errantry". And on this charge, he admitted, 'If I am charged with not having adopted a sufficiently strict definition of "knight-errantry", I can only cry *mea culpa*.'³³ Although he claims to have adopted the term "knight-errant" only as a convenient label for a general readership, it would appear that he failed to draw up a sufficiently strict definition of "*xia*" and its variants.

Following James J.Y. Liu, sinologist Raymond Dawson also adopted the term "knight-errant" to describe the *xia* in both historical and fictional works, dating knights-errant back to antiquity to Sima Qian's history and tracing them to the tradition of knight-errantry as manifested in the brotherly relationship among bandit-heroes in *The Water Margin* in the Song Dynasty.³⁴ Although Dawson has borrowed the term "knight-errant" from the West, he is careful to point out the difference between knights-errant in the West and Chinese knights-errant, as he maintains, 'Unlike their European counterparts, Chinese knights-errant were not motivated by romantic love or religious inspiration, and they were often persons

³¹ William Caxton, in his *Ordre of Chyualry* translated from the French of Ramon Lull (London: Early English Texts Society, 1926), p. 43, quoted in James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, p. 197.

³² James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, p. 197.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

³⁴ Raymond Dawson, *The Chinese Experience* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978), pp. 279-81.

of plebeian origin or occupation.³⁵ Dawson has, in fact, labelled the knights-errant as bad elements in society, condemning them as:

Knight-errantry was a disruptive force in society, not only because it broke social barriers, but also because it meant taking the law into one's own hands. It meant "robbing the rich to help the poor", in the manner of Robin Hood; and it meant wreaking justice and vengeance, as the Liangshanpo heroes did in a society in which officials were corrupt and the law perverted.³⁶

From his interpretation of *xia* and its variants, it can be argued that Dawson may not have chosen an appropriate word as he has to explicate the term "knight-errant" by negating what it originally stood for, stripping it of the most salient associations of a knight-errant in Medieval Europe. Perhaps, "outlaw" or "anarchist" would be more appropriate here.

Like James J.Y. Liu, Ma Yau-woon also uses the term "knight-errant" for *xia* and its variants. Ma found the *xia* figures, in both historical texts and fictional works, difficult to define, 'rendered ambiguous by the passage of time, the changing cultural and political background, the different needs of various genres, and shifting literary taste [...].'³⁷ On the difficulty of defining the *xia* figures in literary genres down the ages, which hinges on an interplay between readers' tastes and expectations and literary traditions unique to the period, Ma thus continues to observe:

One would expect that different periods have brought forth different chivalric figures who in turn appear differently in their literary representations, the shaping of which is further governed by the particularity of generic forms and the cumulative effects of traditions.³⁸

³⁵ Ibid., p. 280.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ma, 'The Knight-Errant in *Hua-pen* Stories', p. 266.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 266-67.

In settling for the term "knight-errant", Ma was not unaware of its linguistic inadequacy and cultural implication, as he points out right at the beginning of his article "The Knights-Errant in *Hua-pen* [*huaben*] Stories" (1975):

For want of a better word, "knight-errant" is here used, as has been the convention, as a term of convenience for *hsia* [*xia*] 俠 and its variants *jen-hsia* [*renxia*] 任俠, *hsia-shih* [*xiashi*] 俠士, *wu-hsia* [*wuxia*] 武俠, *hsia-k'o* [*xiake*] 俠客, *yu-hsia* [*youxia*] 游俠, *i-hsia* [*yixia*] 義俠, *hao-hsia* [*haoxia*] 豪俠, etc.), but without implying that the Chinese chivalric hero has a comparable political impact, social standing, economic influence, and cultural superiority to that enjoyed by the medieval European figure known by the same term.³⁹

Like James J.Y. Liu before him, Ma has included as criteria for choosing his translated term factors such as "convention" and "convenience", as spelt out clearly above. Also like Liu, Ma is fully aware of the basic differences between Chinese knights-errant and European knights. Unlike Liu, whose discussion of the *xia* takes into account both historical and fictional characters from the fourth century BC to the present day, Ma's discussion is confined to the *xia* found in *huaben* 話本 literature, story-tellers' promptbooks which originated in the Song Dynasty (AD 960-1279).

In fact, Ma studied Endymion Wilkinson's criticism of James J.Y. Liu's translation "knight-errant"; Ho Ping-ti's criticism of Burton Watson's translation "wandering knights";⁴⁰ Yang Lien-sheng's philological explanation of the term *xia* in his review of James J.Y. Liu's book plus other sources before deciding to use the term "knight-errant". In describing the Chinese knight-errant as:

A man of atypical prowess (regardless of his outward build), fascinatingly skilled in the use of arms and equally adept in hand to hand combat, one who would enlist, rarely with second thoughts, his physical strength, and sometimes his financial

³⁹ Ibid., p. 268.

⁴⁰ See Ho Ping-ti's review article 'Records of China's Grand Historian: Some Problems of Translation', *Pacific Affairs*, 36.2 (1962), 171-82.

resources as well, to right wrongs for the poor or the oppressed with whom he may not have any previous connections at all.⁴¹

Ma discerns the appropriateness of a term suggested by Ch'ü T'ung-tsu, "redresser-of-wrongs",⁴² which, according to Ch'ü, is close to the Chinese concept of *xia*. But he also points out that if this coined term is adopted throughout a text, it will create an undesirable jaw-cracking effect. Ma's portrayal of the Chinese knight-errant is of a figure endowed with superb fighting skills, one who is generous in helping others, financially or otherwise, and willing to dispense justice and right wrongs for the weak and poor in society. He perceives the Chinese knights-errant as individuals, who are mostly, if not exclusively, vigorously trained in martial arts. Ma makes a distinction between figures who perform sorcerous acts⁴³ and those who show an ability in the regular type of fighting skills. Those who rely on sorcerous skills are usually 'shadowy, self-restrained, scheming, and rather unpredictable' while those who depend mainly, if not exclusively, on their training in martial arts usually appear as 'open-hearted, forthright, sturdy, and rather unrestrained.'⁴⁴ Of course, not to be dismissed is that it is the call of the knight-errant to render service ranging from grave to trivial.

Surmising on the qualities of the *xia*, however, Ma has this to offer: 'Given the ambiguity and range of the concept of *hsia* [*xia*], it may not be surprising to find that the Chinese knight-errant can possibly be an ambiguous figure with an obvious lack of praiseworthy qualities and that his actions and motives can be equally questionable.'⁴⁵ It would appear

⁴¹ Ma, 'The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* Stories', p. 269.

⁴² Ch'ü, pp. 186-87, quoted in Ma, 'The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* Stories', p. 268, footnote 4. Like Burton Watson, whose translated term will be discussed below, Ch'ü also wrote about the *xia* in the Han Dynasty, treating it as a special Han expression, whose meaning could only be fully understood by situating the term in the political, social, and cultural climate prevailing then.

⁴³ One should not confuse the sorcerous acts of the Chinese knights-errant with the magic works found in the sword-and-sorcery adventure stories in the fantastic romance in the West. See Betty Rosenberg, pp. 211-13 on book titles in the West.

⁴⁴ Ma, 'The Knight-errant in *Hua-pen* stories', p. 282.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

that Ma perceives the Chinese knights-errant in a rather negative light. To him, they seem to be figures of dubious character, whose ulterior motives in fighting wrongs seem to fall short of the righteousness and justice they claim. To these qualities of the Chinese knights-errant, Ma has more to add:

A Chinese knight-errant can thus be truly versatile. But whether he is an emperor-to-be, or a fame-seeker, or a shadowy figure of debatable character, or a swordsman (or swordswoman) with magical power, or an outstanding outlaw, or an individual challenging the forces of injustice, there is one basic prerequisite in that [...] he has to be very good in fist-fighting and skilled in the use of arms (preferably with a choice of weapon of his own), with or without the help of sorcerous magic.⁴⁶

According to Ma, regardless of the social label one may carry, what marks him out as a Chinese knight-errant is his fighting skills, be they pugilistic skills or the use of weapons. Thus, fighting ability came to be regarded as a qualifying feat for knights-errant.

Like James J.Y. Liu, sinologists Ma Yau-woon and Joseph S.M. Lau, in adopting "knight-errant" for the *xia* in the translated stories collected in their *Traditional Chinese Stories: Themes and Variations* (1978),⁴⁷ are fully aware of the inadequacy of this English term in bringing out the cultural concept embodied in the Chinese language as well as the divergent cultural difference encompassed in these two terms as they make this very clear right before going into the meaning of "knight-errant" in the translated stories:

Lacking an equivalent in English, we have used "knight-errant" as a matter of convenience for *hsia* [*xia*] and its variants. It goes without saying that the Chinese knight-errant referred to here is the product of a culture very different from that of medieval Europe.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 290.

⁴⁷ Included under the section "the knight-errant" in Ma Yau-woon and Joseph S.M. Lau, eds, *Traditional Chinese Stories: Themes and Variations*, pp. 41-82, are six stories of knights-errant from different periods in Chinese literature, namely, 'The Biography of Yu Jang', 'Prince Tan of Yen', 'Feng Yen', 'Wu-shuang the Peerless', 'The Sung Founder Escorts Chiang-niang One Thousand Li', and 'The Lady Knight-Errant'.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 39.

According to Ma and Lau, *xia* is depicted as 'the figure of the righteous man-at-arms as champion of justice.'⁴⁹ To them, also worthy of noting is the distinguishing characteristic of a Chinese knight-errant as in the stories:

The Chinese knight-errant is usually seen as a man of extraordinary martial skill (his outward appearance often belies his inward strength) and spiritual discipline. Subscribing to what seems to us to be a very narrow and personal code of honor, he would often offer his services in the name of justice and benevolence to anyone who happens to cater to his fancy [...]. A Chinese knight-errant may offer his service to someone not so much for the defense of justice as for the sake of returning the favors he has received from the one who appreciates him.⁵⁰

The Chinese knights-errant, as depicted by Ma and Lau, would seem to possess some positive and desirable character traits. They are elevated to a higher level, with "spiritual discipline" and "code of honour" as extolling labels. And regarding the concept of returning of favours to someone, this cannot be properly understood without reference to the principle of *bao* 報 (reciprocation) in traditional Chinese society and one of the traditions that has influenced the concept of *bao* is that of *xia* or *youxia*.⁵¹

Unlike James J.Y. Liu, who uses the term "Chinese knights-errant" as a convenient label for the *xia* characters drawn from historical figures since the Warring States and Early Han Periods (c. 300 - 120 BC) as well as idealized fictional characters in poetry; in fiction including chivalric tales in classical prose, colloquial tales, ballads, oral songs, long romances, and later chivalric fiction; and in theatre, starting with Song and Southern Yuan

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ For details on the concept of *bao*, see Chang Hui-ching and G. Richard Holt, 'Debt-Repaying Mechanism in Chinese Relationships: An Exploration of the Folk Concepts of *Pao* and Human Emotional Debt', *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, 27.4 (1994), 351-87; Lin Liyun 林麗雲, compiled, 'Bao de guan nian yu xing wei 報的觀念與行為 [Concept of *bao* and its behaviour]', in *Zhongguo ren de shi jian you xi -- ren qing yu shi gu* 《中國人的世間遊戲 -- 人情與世故》 [Worldly games Chinese people play -- human indebtedness and worldly wisdom], ed. by Gu Yujun and others 顧瑜君等編 (Taipei: Chang laoshi chubanshe, 1992), pp. 1-48; and Yang Lien-sheng, 'The Concept of "Pao" as a Basis for Social Relations in China'; note in particular the influence of *xia* or *youxia* on the concept of *bao*, p. 294.

drama, Ma and Lau use the term "Chinese knights-errant" only for historical or idealized fictional characters found in Chinese traditional stories. Ma and Lau try to emphasize the personal attributes and behavioural characteristics of the *xia* found in the stories, particularly qualities, such as, their code of honour, righteousness, and service rendered to friends.

Burton Watson, who translated Sima Qian's *Shi ji* 《史記》⁵² into the *Records of the Grand Historian of China* (1961),⁵³ also noted the imperfection of the English term "knight-errant" for the Chinese term *xia* or *youxia*, like James J.Y. Liu, Ma Yau-woon and Joseph S.M. Lau who adopted the same translated term years later. Watson's choice of "wandering knights" could have been motivated by Sima Qian's description of the conduct of the *youxia* in the opening paragraph in Chapter 124 of his *Shi ji*, entitled "The Biographies of the Wandering Knights":

Saving others in distress, helping those who cannot help themselves -- is this not what a benevolent man does? Never betraying a trust, never going back on one's word -- this is the conduct of a righteous man. Thus I made The Biographies of the Wandering Knights.⁵⁴

Linked to that, Watson's translational choice could also have been linguistically motivated. Translating each of the characters in *youxia* literally would yield "wandering" as one of the possible literal meanings for *you* and "knight" as a possible close equivalent for *xia*, and thus logically, *youxia* as a term would be rendered into "wandering knight" by Watson.

⁵² Sima Qian (c. 145 BC - 86 ?), famous historian of the Han dynasty. He was commissioned by the imperial house to compile the voluminous work *Shi ji* 《史記》, the Historical Records, at once a great work on history and a great achievement in literature.

⁵³ Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian of China*, Vol. I, Early Years of the Han Dynasty, 209 to 141 BC and Vol. II, The Age of Emperor Wu, 140 to circa 100 BC, trans. by Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

⁵⁴ Ibid., II, 452.

In translating Ban Gu's 班固 *Han shu* 《漢書》, History of the Western Han Dynasty, Chapter 92 into English, which was brought out in 1974, Watson still adopts the term "wandering knights" for the *youxia* as he called this chapter in his *Courtier and Commoner in Ancient China: Selection from the History of Former Han* "*Han Shu* 92: The Biographies of the Wandering Knights".⁵⁵ Although the "wandering knights" in *Han shu* 92 include the same group of *xia* characters in the Han period collected in Sima Qian's *Shi ji*, translated also by him over a decade before, Watson distinguishes the different attitudes adopted by the two historians towards the wandering knights as he points out in his qualifying footnote that 'Ssu-ma Ch'ien [Sima Qian], as mentioned in the Introduction, had written rather sympathetically of them, but Pan Ku [Ban Gu] takes a sterner view of their activity'.⁵⁶ On Ban Gu's denouncing the *youxia* as outlaws, Watson has further to add:

It is difficult to determine just what, in Pan Ku's [Ban Gu] eyes, qualified a man to be called a "knight" (*hsia*) [*xia*] or "strong man" (*hao*), outside of a certain swaggering contempt for conventional morality, an elaborate concern for honor, and a fondness for the grand gesture. Such ways apparently appealed greatly to certain elements in Han society and won for their possessors large bands of ardent followers who were often an embarrassment and the source of their undoing.⁵⁷

Watson still adopts the same translated term "wandering knights" in spite of the negative attitude evinced by Ban Gu. One may argue that the term "wandering knight" has been intended by Watson to either carry both positive and negative connotations as the case may be or carry no connotation at all as it defies the value judgement of the two historians.

Commenting on Watson's choice "wandering knights" for the Han expression *youxia*, Professor Ho Ping-ti reiterates that Watson is more conscious than others of the imperfection of the English term, as may be evidenced by Watson's qualifying footnote:

⁵⁵ Ban Gu, *Courtier and Commoner in Ancient China: Selection from the History of Former Han*, trans. by Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), pp. 222-46.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 222, footnote 1.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 222-23, footnote 1.

'The word "knight" here should not be understood as designating any particular formal rank in society. It is used rather to suggest the kind of honorable and self-sacrificing conduct which characterized this group of men at their best.'⁵⁸

Watson does not identify the Chinese knights-errant as a distinct social group occupying a special niche in Chinese history. Rather, he perceives them as individuals possessing some positive character traits, men who bespeak such honourable conduct in ancient China, cutting across social class and serving the needs of the time, as he further observes in his qualifying footnote:

Such self-appointed 'bosses' or protectors of others no doubt served a very useful purpose in the chaotic society of the late Chou [Zhou] and early Han. With the restoration of peace and stability, however, they often became a nuisance and the Han government took strict measures to suppress them.⁵⁹

In fact, the *xia* in China, originally hereditary warriors, formerly in the employment of princes or noble families, who were first recognized as a group in the Warring States period, evolved, in the course of time, to include personages from all walks of life, be they emperors-to-be, future governors and administrators, roving bandits, professional outlaws, mysterious swordsmen, expert burglars, career soldiers, nun-swordswomen, or others.

On the distinction between *xia* and those acting as *xia*, Sima Qian emphasizes it is their conduct and moral ethics that differentiate the former from the latter, as he points out in closing his Chapter 124 in *Shi ji* "The Biographies of the Wandering Knights":

After this there were a great many who acted as knights, but they were an arrogant lot and hardly worth mentioning. [...] but although they acted as knights, they were rather timid and retiring and had the manners of gentleman. [...] [They] were no

⁵⁸ Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian of China*, trans. by Burton Watson, II, 452, footnote 1, as quoted in Ho Ping-ti, pp. 176-77.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

more than robbers and brigands of the lowest sort and certainly do not deserve to be treated here.⁶⁰

Perhaps, it should be pointed out here that on the identity of the Chinese knights-errant and their lack of social background, James L.Y. Liu's observation is no different from Watson's: 'It is best to regard the knights-errant not as a social class or professional group but simply as men of strongly individualistic temperament, who behaved in a certain way based on certain ideals.'⁶¹

It would seem that Liu either concurs with Watson's view or echoes Watson's opinion. Liu outlines the ideals which form the basis of knightly behaviour expected of the *xia* in traditional Chinese society, namely, altruism, justice, individual freedom, personal loyalty, courage, truthfulness and mutual faith, honour and fame, plus generosity and contempt for wealth.⁶² Nevertheless, Han Yunbo 韓雲波 disputes Liu's suggestion that the Chinese knights-errant be regarded as personages with marked social behaviour. Han believes that *xia* should be taken to represent a form of social relations and social attitude in Chinese society.⁶³

Over Watson's adoption of the term "wandering knights" for *youxia*, Ho Ping-ti, however, is quick to point out the mistake made by Watson, a renowned scholar in the field, who, by attending only to its surface literal meaning, translated *youxia* as the "wandering knights", when in actual fact, that *youxia* 'were definitely not "knights", "wandering" or sedentary, but were in reality the stalwarts of the underground of the Former Han society.'⁶⁴ Ho believes that Watson could have avoided such a blunder had he investigated the institutional and social contexts of this special Han expression

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 461.

⁶¹ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, p. 4.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 4-7.

⁶³ Han Yunbo 韓雲波, 1994, p. 92.

⁶⁴ Ho Ping-ti, p. 172.

further. Ho points out why Watson's choice of "knight-errant" could be so misleading: 'Precisely because the word knight is a long-established status term enveloped in a rich aura of romance, it is unavoidably misleading when used to describe a special Han social group so vastly different in status from the medieval European knights.'⁶⁵

Ho Ping-ti suggests that an understanding of the social status and role of *youxia* is therefore essential to any suggestion for a possible better translation.⁶⁶ Summing up the problems of translating *youxia*, he remarks that 'the key to a more accurate translation is to grasp the underworld character of the *hsia* [*xia*]' and that those prominent *xia* for whom the Grand Historian, Sima Qian, sang praises can be translated as "underworld leaders" or "underworld stalwarts", whereas *xia* as an abstract noun may perhaps be conveniently translated as "underground chivalry" or more safely as "underground activities".⁶⁷ Here, Ho Ping-ti seems to suggest there should be different translations for the term *xia*, depending on whether it is used as a concrete noun designating personages in history or an abstract noun embracing social norms, attributes or institutions. Linguistic and cultural factors aside, Ho introduces an additional social factor as an element in interpreting the term *xia*. Besides investigating the institutional and social contexts surrounding the use of the Chinese term *xia* or *youxia* as well as the social status and role of *youxia* in the Han Dynasty, as Ho Ping-ti suggests, having a firm grasp on an underworld leader's main personal attributes would also help one to render the original broad *xia* expression into something more specific, and as an example, Ho cites the case of Zhu Jie 朱解. In this case, it would be fairly safe to render the introductory phrase 'known for *xia*' into 'known for his selflessness and magnanimity'.⁶⁸ Ho Ping-ti's suggestion that different translations,

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 177.

⁶⁶ Ho Ping-ti believes that an understanding of the social origin of Former Han *youxia*; *xia*'s social conduct, role and source of power; *xia*'s extra-class connections and the limits of their power; as well as *xia* and the state is essential to any suggestion for a better translation of the Han expression *youxia*, *ibid.*, pp. 177-80.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 180.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

implying also the best choice from among other possible alternatives for each translational situation, be adopted for the term *xia* as deemed appropriate by the linguistic and socio-cultural contexts called for might well be considered an eclectic approach to translation.

Under the same circumstances, Ho Wai-kit 何偉傑 would probably also have agreed that 'the sensible course of action is probably the eclectic, expansive and comprehensive approach,'⁶⁹ According to Ho, "'Eclectic" means, among other things, not rigidly following any one school, theory or method, but using parts of many different ideas and options appropriate to the requirements of the moment.'⁷⁰ Eclecticism boils down essentially to a pragmatic approach to handling translational problems, defying time and space; culture and boundary. Drawing on the advances made in translation studies in the past few decades, Ho Wai-kit would be able to explore this translational issue in a manner denied to translators over three decades ago and to inject some elements into exploring the issue under debate. Adopting an eclectic approach to rendering the *xia* in question would also mean freeing the issue from old schools of debate, moving it across to other academic or professional domains, thus throwing the problem open for new intellectual exploration. Summing up his views on eclecticism in translating, Ho Wai-kit suggests:

It may be our best policy to keep an open-mind, to see all the major approaches as complementing and supplementing one another, to apply any of these and any new and worth-while approaches in various stages of a translating job, for various sections of a sophisticated piece of work, and generally to adopt widely overlapping approaches at different times while keeping in mind the necessity of seeing different attitudes as integral parts of the whole modern theoretical mentality, one that has not become perfect, and may never be.⁷¹

Regarding the term *youxia*, rendered as "wandering knights" by Burton Watson, Ch'en Shih-hsiang 陳世驥 remarks that the word *you* in *youxia* should be taken to mean

⁶⁹ Ho Wai-kit, 'On Eclecticism in Translating', *The Hong Kong Linguist*, 9 (1991), 47-60 (p. 57).

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 58.

"isolated" or "displaced" as in *youli* 游離, rather than "wandering".⁷² Ch'en could not see why the knights should be called "wandering" as some of them obviously had homes. James J.Y. Liu points out that these figures were so called not because they were necessarily homeless, but because they were ready to travel around to help out others and were, at times, obliged to leave or flee from the law.⁷³

After Burton Watson, Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang also attempted Sima Qian's *Shi ji*, Chapter 124 on the *youxia* in their *Selections from Records of the Historian*,⁷⁴ brought out in 1979 by the Foreign Languages Press in Beijing, an official state translation organ in China. They rendered the *youxia* into "gallant citizens". Although they have not provided explanatory notes on their translational choice, it is to be understood that "gallant" refers to bravery, showing no fear of dangerous or difficult things, rather than politeness and kindness men show towards women, especially when in public, as the context of that chapter points only to bravery. It can be argued that their translational choice, considering they were translating for a state organ when China was still a communist regime, could have been subject to politico-ideological considerations, albeit censorship. Their choice "gallant citizen", emphasizing the bravery of the *youxia* as well as their legal status as citizens is considered in line with the ideological dictates of China. Watson makes the following observation in translating the same Chapter 124 of *Shi ji*: 'Writers of the Chinese communist regime have praised Ssu-ma Ch'ien [Sima Qian] for his recognition of the knights, but this is because they regard them as "heroes of the people" who fought against the oppression of the feudalistic system.'⁷⁵

⁷² Ch'en Shih-hsiang's suggestion is found in James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, p. 209, additional note 1; later also cited by Yang Lien-sheng in his review article 'James J.Y. Liu: The Chinese Knight-Errant', p. 287.

⁷³ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, p. 209, additional note 1.

⁷⁴ Sima Qian, *Selections from Records of the Historian*, trans. by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1979), pp. 429-36.

⁷⁵ Sima Qian, *The Grand Historian of China*, trans. by Burton Watson, II, p.452, footnote 1.

Under these circumstances, one would also expect "gallant citizen" is to be preferred to "knights" as the latter connotes medieval Europe, service, courtly love, Christianity, feudalism, least befitting the heroes who lived in ancient China according to Chinese communist dogma. The Yangs are not alone in emphasizing the bravery of the *youxia* by labelling them "gallant citizens". Adrian Hsia, writing on the popular novel in nineteenth-century China, also points out that the traditional Chinese novel *San xia wu yi* 《三俠五義》 could be translated approximately as "three brave men and five upright men".⁷⁶ The Yangs and Hsia focus on this positive trait -- bravery in the *xia* or *youxia* in question.

Before leaving the *xia* figures in Chinese history, one may perhaps find it interesting to note that the ancient *xia*, to a certain extent, resembled the *ronin*,⁷⁷ rendered also into "knights-errant" in English. The *ronin* can also be traced to similar social background in feudal times in Japan, except that the *ronin*, who first appeared in the ninth century, only claimed their rightful place in history in the seventeenth century, during the Tokugawa Shogunate in Japan. The *Encyclopedia American* describes the *ronin* as:

Ro-nen, masterless warriors of feudal Japan. The term, meaning "wave men," was used as early as the ninth century for persons with no duty of service or employment to anyone.

In feudal times ronin were men of the samurai, or warrior, class whose masters had been dispossessed or who for other reasons lacked employment with a lord. As knights-errant they could be hired for particular military actions. In the seventeenth century many of them were vagrants who plagued the newly established Tokugawa Shogunate with their brawls and rebellions. Toward the end of the Shogunate a large number of disaffected samurai became ronin by leaving their masters. They helped bring about the restoration of imperial power in 1868, after which the feudal system was abolished.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Adrian Hsia, 'The Popular Novel in Nineteenth-Century China', *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, 9.3 (1982), 461-69 (p.466, footnote 6).

⁷⁷ This idea of the Japanese 'ronin' was first suggested to me by Jacqueline Joyce, lecturer at Dublin City University, on a bus ride to Madrid on June 1, 1996 after attending the 2° Congreso Internacional sobre Transvases Culturales: Literatura, Cine, Traducción, 30 May - 1 June, 1996, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain.

⁷⁸ *Encyclopedia American*, 23 (1981), 759.

The *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan*, however, traces the origins of the *ronin* to peasants in early Japan:

Ronin 浪人 literally, "floating men". The term ronin is most familiar as a label for the masterless samurai of the Edo period (1600-1868), but in early Japan, it referred to peasants who left their land to work elsewhere. They formed an element of most armies and readily transferred from one commander to another or returned to the land.⁷⁹

One interesting observation emerges from a comparison of the *xia* in China and the *ronin* in Japan, that both groups, being warriors, are products of feudal times each in their respective countries, China and Japan. The *xia* only became a distinct social group following the disintegration of feudalism in China over two thousand years ago, while the *ronin* helped bring about the disintegration of feudalism in Japan over one hundred years ago. After becoming masterless, the *xia*, like the *ronin*, also sold their services to whoever wanted to employ them. Some of the *xia*, like the *ronin*, also wandered throughout the country or were ready to travel to help the others in times of need or to flee from the law. In view of these apparent similarities between the *xia* and the *ronin*, Burton Watson's "wandering knights" for the *xia* in the Han period could, perhaps, also be applied to the *ronin* as many of them were vagrants, other than the literal meaning of *ronin* in written form itself reads "rovers" in Chinese. *Ronin* has acquired another meaning in modern times. In colloquial usage, *ronin* means a man looking for a job, as given on the dedication page of *The Reluctant Ronin*, a paperback popular fiction by James Melville.⁸⁰

Looking again at the interpretation and translation of *xia* and its variants in Chinese literature, as an example in an eighteenth century Chinese erotic novel, the following words are spoken by Sai Kunlun who is described as being a *xiake*:

⁷⁹ *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan*, 2, 1275.

⁸⁰ James Melville, *The Reluctant Ronin* (London: Headline, 1988).

Everyone knows I commit no injustice. I am no common bandit. I have my professional honor...Let us swear an oath of brotherhood on the spot. One day perhaps you may need my services. Then you may be sure that I will help you with all my strength, even if it means laying down my life.⁸¹

Wilkinson, in his review article on *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, points out that James J.Y. Liu would translate *xiake* as "knight-errant" which is an unfortunate translation since the *xiake* or *youxia* of the eighteenth century, as in earlier periods, were not "knights-errant" as we understand the term but (typically) "noble outlaws" or (as in Sai Kunlun's case) "honest thieves."⁸² Here, Wilkinson wishes to draw our attention to the "noble" or "honest" qualities found in social undesirables or rejects such as "outlaws" or "thieves". The *xia* figures are problematized. To avoid the false connotations which the term "knight-errant" arouses in the Chinese context as James J.Y. Liu decides to stick to it, asking his readers 'in a splendid piece of Alice-in-Wonderland reasoning to remember that when he uses the term "knight-errantry" it is to be understood to mean "what the Chinese call knight-errantry",⁸³ not that of medieval European chivalry, Wilkinson is quick to assign *xiake* or *youxia* to their respective places in society, directing us to the social status occupied by these characters and the kind of positive and desirable human qualities discovered in them.

On the meaning and his subsequent treatment of the translated term for *xia*, Wilkinson maintains that:

The most fitting translation of *xia* and its cognates will depend upon the period; it was used in so many different ways that to use a uniform terminology [...] can only be misleading. What the term meant can only be decided after an analysis of the phenomena it was used to describe.⁸⁴

⁸¹ *Jou pu tuan* 《玉蒲團》, The Carnal Prayer Mat, an eighteenth century Chinese erotic novel translated into English from the German version of Franz Kuhn by Richard Martin, Grove Press edition, pp. 49, 51, quoted in Wilkinson, p. 112.

⁸² Wilkinson, p. 112.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

He also maintains that 'any study of the outlaw in Chinese society will not only have to examine the different conditions which led people at different periods "to take the law into their own hands" [...] but will also have to examine the history of and the changing attitudes towards clan feud and blood revenge,'⁸⁵ as the *xia* frequently and indeed in many periods, typically, began activities as a classical blood-vengeance outlaw. It could be inferred that Wilkinson has labelled the *xia* as belonging to the outlaws in society.

According to Wilkinson, not to be overlooked, yet awaiting further investigation, are 'the relations between patrons and their clients, between the gang-leader and his men [...]. An important element in these relations was the distribution of largess [...] non-kin or pseudo-kin associations as the sworn brotherhood, the gang, the band, and the secret society [...] the role of manly-woman in feuds and wars [...].'⁸⁶ He believes a full understanding of the *xia* as an emergent social phenomenon could only be obtained by exploring these elements further. Again, Wilkinson stresses the subordinating role assumed by the *xia* in Chinese society as well as the attendant customs and rituals practised by the group to confer solidarity among in-group members.

Like Wilkinson, Ho Ping-ti emphasizes, in his succinct discussion of the *xia* in Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220), the underworld nature of *xia* and he translates the *xia* as "underworld stalwarts". They lived beyond the law and took the law into their own hands in a period of social chaos and political upheavals. They continued to exemplify certain principles described by Sima Qian in Chapter 124, "Lives of the Noble Outlaws"⁸⁷ in his

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 113.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Burton Watson translates the title of this chapter as "The Biographies of the Wandering Knights" (II, 452-61) in his *Records of the Grand Historian of China* by Sima Qian. Ho Ping-ti, in his review article on Watson's translation, claims that *Shi ji*, Chapter 124 is one of the most difficult chapters to translate and that an understanding of the nature and character of the *youxia* in the Han Dynasty is a requisite before a proper appraisal of Watson's handling of that chapter can be made.

Shi ji, the Historical Records. Echoing Watson and James J.Y. Liu, Ho Ping-ti also stresses it is not their social background, rather, it is their conduct and principles that these individuals upheld that made them stand out as the *xia* in Chinese history.

Perhaps it would be helpful to point out here that James J.Y. Liu distinguishes between the *xia* described by him and that by Ho Ping-ti, and he defends himself by saying that he was writing about the historical *xia* as well as the idealized fictional *xia* in Chinese literature while Ho was writing about the historical *xia* of the Han period alone and that to have adopted Ho's translation, "underworld stalwarts" as the title of his book would have been misleading.⁸⁸

Ch'ü T'ung-tsu, like Ho Ping-ti, writing also about the historical *xia* of the Han period, however, rendered the term in question into "redressers-of-wrong". He considers the *youxia* or redressers-of-wrong belonging to one of the powerful families which 'dominated Han government and society and exercised control over the rest of the population.'⁸⁹ However, the *youxia* differs from the other powerful families, as he describes this group in his book *Han Social Structure*:

The power of the *yu-hsia* [*youxia*] 遊俠, the redressers-of-wrongs, was primarily based on sheer physical force, which enabled them to control behavior or even to have life-or-death control over others. As a rule, they had neither political nor economic power; but there was a close connection between such nongovernmental coercive power and political power. The *yu-hsia* [*youxia*], who often associated with the nobles and officials, were backed by political power. On the other hand, the nobles and officials who were associated with the *yu-hsia* [*youxia*] were supported by them and commanded their services. There were also nobles and officials who were engaged in *yu-hsia* [*youxia*] activities.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ James J.Y. Liu, 'Rejoinder to Endymion Wilkinson's Review of *The Chinese Knight-Errant*', p. 36.

⁸⁹ Ch'ü, *Han Social Structure*, p. 160. Besides the *youxia* or redressers-of-wrong, other powerful families in the Han period included (1) old families; the descendants of the ruling houses of the six kingdoms overthrown by the Qin, (2) imperial relatives of the ruling family of the Han who were made kings and marquises, (3) consort families, (4) officials, and (5) wealthy merchants.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

Thus, Ch'ü introduces to Western readers 'a power group whose power was derived from neither political nor economic power but from coercive power was the redressers-of-wrong, known as *yu-hsia* (*shieh*) [*youxia*], *ch'ing-hsia* [*qingxia*] 輕俠, or *jen-hsia* [*renxia*] 任俠.'⁹¹ He points out that it is their coercive power, involving also the illegitimate use of force, violence, lawbreaking that earned them the title "redressers-of-wrong".

In a vein similar to Ho Ping-ti's comment on Burton Watson's translation of *youxia* into "wandering knights", Ch'ü observes why he considers Watson's translating could be misleading:

Yu-hsia [*youxia*] has customarily been rendered as "wandering knights" or "knights-errant." Since the term "knight" has a special meaning in European history designating a formal rank in society, it is misleading.[...] *Yu* [*you*] could mean "to wander" or "to be associated with others" (*chiao-yu* [*jiaoyou*] 交遊). It seems more likely that in this context it implies associating, which was a characteristic of *yu-hsia* [*youxia*].⁹²

Ch'ü rejects either "wandering knights" or "knights-errant" for *xia* by asserting that the *xia* is a strictly Chinese cultural product. He attributes Watson's mistake to his failing to explore other possible meanings associated with the term *you*. Neither does Ch'ü acknowledge a formal rank occupied by the *xia* in Han society, as the knights did in European society.

After reiterating the point that *you* could mean 'to be associated with others' and more likely that 'in this context it implies associating' by citing Han Fei's definition of *xia* as 'a person who gave up his official post and was fond of association' and quoting also another commentator Yan Shigu's meaning of *xia* is 'to assist others by force' as well as drawing on

⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 185-86. For details on the *youxia* as a power group, the *xia* code of honour, *xia* behaviour, and *xia* activities, see *ibid.*, pp. 185-95, 245-47.

⁹² Ibid., p. 186.

Sima Qian's authoritative statement which gives a vivid description of the activities of *you xia*, Ch'ü then explains his translational decision:

We may say that *hsia* [*xia*] designates a kind of personality and behavior characterized by heroism, especially heroism connected with the redressing of wrongs. "Redresser-of-wrongs" [sic] thus seems to be the closest to the original meaning, but since the Chinese term has no exact equivalent in English, we prefer romanization.⁹³

Like Fung Yu-lan in his book *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, once Ch'ü, in his *Han Social Structure*, has explained the meaning of *xia* and its variants with a translated term, he then resorts to using the transliterated term throughout his text. Unlike the *xia* which appears in fictional or dramatical texts, i.e. in a fictitious context, the *xia* resolved by both Fung Yu-lan the philosopher and Ch'ü T'ung-tsu the historian has to be examined and interpreted in a true historical context, affected by spatio-temporal factors pertinent to a particular culture and period. Here, one could see that the type of text as well as the nature of information to be conveyed may also influence one's translational choice. For both Fung the philosopher and Ch'ü the historian, the search for a term precise, all-meanings-embracing, and yet embodying the quintessential elements of a term belonging to a culture removed from time and space could perhaps only be answered by its own transliteration. Regarding both Fung's and Ch'ü's choice for a transliterated term for *xia*, here, one would tend not to agree with James J.Y. Liu's comment that transliteration could be an easy way out.

Ch'ü considers the *youxia* "redressers-of-wrong" as the basic activity that characterized them as a group, most of whom were people of humble origin, was the redressing of wrongs, including 'keeping promises, relieving others in distress, harboring fugitives, associating with guests, or spending wealth generously in receiving them.'⁹⁴ One of the

⁹³ Ibid., pp. 186-87.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 188.

basic codes of honour observed by the *youxia* was to offer financial help to the needy. As pointed out by Ch'ü, an understanding of how these "redressers-of-wrong" went about redressing a wrong would enable one to identify their *xia* behaviour and *xia*-type activities:

They never appealed to law in order to redress a wrong; instead, they resorted to physical force or violence, or the threat of violence. By this means they were in a position to exercise the power of coercive force over others, either to force them to do something or to restrain them from doing something. In short, coercion was the basis of their power, enabling them to have control over the activities and even the lives of others.⁹⁵

Thus, the *youxia* are depicted as representing the illegitimate use of coercive power and violence. They were considered lawbreakers, destructive of social and legal order. However, the illegitimate use of coercive power and violence was justified in the eyes of the *youxia* as legal means eluded them at times. The "heroism" characterizing their personality and behaviour, especially "heroism connected with the redressing of wrongs", may, perhaps, also be considered in a different light.⁹⁶

Throughout the ages, the ideal of the noble outlaw has been associated with ideals of heroic and sometimes patriotic action. Wilkinson notices that 'it was at times contrasted with more "Confucian" values which were derided as bookwormish.'⁹⁷ He further points out that:

In popular literature it [*xia*] was used to describe the many varieties of Robin Hoodism which became such a popular theme. At one extreme it very soon lost its associations with lawlessness and violence and lent its terminology to the description of little acts of generosity (usually outside the limits set by family decorum and in this sense altruistic). It also became a biographical cliché for the

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 190.

⁹⁶ Other works on heroism of the *xia* include Marie Chai, *Heroic Values in Ancient and Medieval China and England* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1972) and Han Yunbo 韓雲波, 'Lun xia yu xia wen xue de hao xiong te zheng - Zhongguo xia wen hua xing tai zhi er 論俠與俠文學的豪雄特征 - 中國俠文化形態之二 [A discourse on the heroic characteristics of *xia* and *xia* literature - patterns of Chinese *xia* culture, no. 2]', *Tian fu xin lun* 《天府新論》, 1(1993), 73-77.

⁹⁷ Wilkinson, p. 113.

odd-ball behavior often indulged in by literati passing through a sort of growing-up stage.⁹⁸

As another example in popular literature, both Liu Ts'un-yan and Susan Roberta Blader translate the title of the late nineteenth-century novel *San xia wu yi* 《三俠五義》 into *Three Heroes and Five Gallants*,⁹⁹ while Adrian Hsia notes that 'a title involves concepts defying a meaningful translation'.¹⁰⁰ Blader has consistently rendered the *xia* in this popular literature into "heroes". They resemble the type of exemplary heroes in Chinese popular fiction categorized by Ruhlmann.¹⁰¹ Blader observes that almost all of the heroes and gallants in the novel fit broadly into Ruhlmann's category of "Swordsman", with certain inevitable variations in the degree of the qualities listed by him for each is 'the impetuous, uninhibited, and generous Swordsman, a lovable and explosive "good fellow"'.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Liu Ts'un-yan, p. 1, footnote 3 and Susan Roberta Blader, *A Critical Study of "San-hsia wu-yi" and Its Relationship to the "Lung-tu kung-an" Song-Book* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1977). The novel *San xia wu yi* is a semi-historical story of adventure and crime detection which belongs to the episodic novel genre of traditional Chinese fiction. The story cycle involves a group of heroes and gallants who allied themselves with Magistrate Bao in his search for justice. The *san xia* 三俠 [Three Heroes] refer to Zhan Zhao 展昭, known also as Nan xia 南俠 [Southern Hero]; Ouyang Chun 歐陽春, known also as Bei xia 北俠 [Northern Hero]; and Ding Zhaolan 丁兆蘭 [Elder Ding] plus Ding Zhaohui 丁兆惠 [Younger Ding], together known as Shuang xia 雙俠 [Twin Heroes]. The *wu yi* 五義 [Five Gallants] refer to Lu Fang 盧方 (Eldest Brother), styled the Penetrating Heaven Rat; Han Zhang 韓章 (Second Brother), styled the Piercing Earth Rat; Xu Qing 徐慶 (Third Brother), styled the Boring Mountain Rat; Jiang Ping 蔣平 (Fourth Brother), styled the Overturning River Rat; and Bai Yutang 白玉堂 (Fifth Brother), styled the Brocade Coat Rat. The figure of Magistrate Bao (AD 999-1063) of the Song Dynasty, an incorruptible government official known for his emphasizing the dignity of law, incorporated into a story cycle, was very popular during the late Qing Dynasty and has remained so until today in Taiwan and Hong Kong. James J.Y. Liu translated the same title into *The Three Knights-Errant and the Five Altruists*, pointing out that the story emphasizes the altruism of the heroes, their sympathy for the poor and oppressed, and their hatred for corrupt and cruel officials. Details on this novel are found in James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-Errant*, pp. 117-20.

¹⁰⁰ Adrian Hsia, 'The Popular Novel in Nineteenth-Century China', p. 467.

¹⁰¹ See Robert Ruhlmann, 'Traditional Heroes in Chinese Popular Fiction', in *The Confucian Persuasion*, ed. by Arthur Wright (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), pp. 141-76 (pp. 150-55).

¹⁰² Blader (p. 48) observes that it would be helpful to refer to Ruhlmann's article 'Traditional Heroes in Chinese Popular Fiction'. Ruhlmann divides the heroes in Chinese popular fiction into three types and presents an interesting analysis of these heroes' specific attributes, their political, moral, and sentimental values, the reasons for their appeal to men's hearts, and their effects on human behaviour

Blader points out, however, a distinction should be made between the swordsman-like type of *xia*, as exemplified by most of the heroes and gallants found in the story, and the *zhen xia* 真俠 "true hero" as exemplified in Zhan Zhao 展昭, the Southern Hero, also the first of the *xia* to appear in *Three Heroes and Five Gallants*. Blader considers him, as a special protector of Magistrate Bao, the wisest, most dignified, and least reckless of all the heroes and believes he is most suited to serving Bao as a personal assistant for he is always available when needed, and astounds everyone with his extraordinary agility and cat-like prowess.¹⁰³ She shows how the nineteenth-century narrator, throughout the story, extolled Zhan Zhao as a "true hero" as, for example, through Zhan Zhao's monologue below, we learn how carefully he has worked out his plan to save his master, Magistrate Bao, from the ambush, so carefully that he has enough time to make a side trip to investigate the possibility of another potential crime:

Then he thought to himself: "Just now I heard Hsiang Fu say that he was going to wait here in T'ien-ch'ang Township [to ambush and kill Magistrate Bao]. Since I already know that Magistrate won't be arriving in T'ien-ch'ang for another few days, why don't I take this opportunity to go and look around at the Miao estate." So thinking, he paid his bill and went downstairs.

[Storyteller:] What a true perpetrator of good deeds and executor of justice! Wherever he goes, he rights whatever wrongs he happens to meet with. It is not that he absolutely must pull up the tree and search out the roots. It is just that once he sees an injustice, he cannot put it down, as though it were some personal affair of his. It is precisely because of this that he does not do shame to the word "hero".¹⁰⁴

during certain periods of Chinese history. Ruhlmann classifies fictional heroes of the novel into three categories -- Swordsman, Scholar, and Prince -- all of which can be found in the *Three Heroes and Five Gallants*: 'the impetuous, uninhibited, and generous Swordsman, a lovable and explosive "good fellow"; the Scholar, of outstanding intelligence, resourcefulness, eloquence, and self-control, "knowing all knowable things and some others," whose powers of reading minds, of seeing into the future, of influencing the forces of nature have a supernatural cast; and the Prince, holder of Heaven's mandate, who does nothing spectacular himself, but is skilled in judging men and in choosing the Scholars and Swordsmen who will enable him to fulfill his destiny' (p. 175).

¹⁰³ Blader, p. 59.

¹⁰⁴ Quoted in Blader, p. 60.

Regardless of the fact whether or not the main characters in *San xia wu yi* manifest themselves as "heroes" or "true heroes", they would still fall into Ruhlmann's category of "Swordsman", as Blader concludes.

Robert Ruhlmann may also be regarded as one of the earliest few sinologists who attempted to introduce the transliterated term *xia* into his essay over thirty years ago. He was aware of the fact that *youxia* had often been rendered as 'knights-errant' when he attempted to transliterate the term. After discussing at considerable length those heroes grouped under his category "Swordsman" and emphasizing their desirable qualities and personal attributes before linking them to the *xia* in Chinese popular fiction, Ruhlmann then slipped the transliterated term *xia* into the rest of his essay. Although he puts the Chinese *xia* on the same par as noble-hearted outlaws such as Robin Hood and Rozsa Sandor, glorified all over the world by folklore, he makes it clear that 'the place of rebels and *hsia* [*xia*] in Chinese fiction is to be understood in relation to a recurrent, if unofficial, institution, that of the private guards hired by merchants and village notables for escorting goods and for help in other businesses requiring *manu militari* handling.'¹⁰⁵ The institution referred to by Ruhlmann is known as *biaojū* 鑣局, "convoy" in English, used here as a convenient label, rather like the present-day Securicor. The convoy is a recurrent institution in most martial arts fiction. By referring to this unofficial institution in Chinese fiction and by assigning the *xia* to his category of "Swordsmen", Ruhlmann has come a long way to preparing Western readers for the reception of martial arts fiction.

Although Sima Qian's *Shi ji*, the Historical Records, is the last official history in China ever to contain a chapter on the *xia*, the development of *xia* as a cultural or philosophical concept, in the course of history, could still be mapped out from works on Chinese history and literature, particularly from tales in *xia* literature. The term *xia*, an old Chinese term which appeared in historical texts over two thousand years ago and has been in use since,

¹⁰⁵ Ruhlmann, p. 172.

must have acquired new and additional meanings during the last two millennia. Not to be dismissed is Ruhlmann's suggestion that one should try to understand the place of *xia* in Chinese fiction in the context of a recurrent institution, i.e. convoy, afore-mentioned. Also, not to be dismissed is Yang Lien-sheng's claim that concept of *xia* has influenced the concept of *bao*, reciprocity, as mentioned earlier in this section.

Although Ruhlmann puts the *xia*, one of the traditional heroes in Chinese popular fiction, under his category "Swordsman", he suggests that the *xia* of fiction, "nonprofit champion of the underdog", be regarded as "an idealized image of the intermediate-stage swordsman."¹⁰⁶ For, according to him:

The *hsia* [*xia*], or "adventurer," does not openly challenge the government as the rebel does. His calling is to break laws, not to question their validity. By killing or other unconventional means, he acts where legal action is bound to fail, for example in cases when his adversaries have won immunity by bribery or intimidation. He puts loyalty to his friends above all, to the extent of ignoring his natural duties toward state and ruler as well as toward his parents: he is a virtual rebel against the established order. Bold and self-reliant, he is prepared to sacrifice his peace and happiness and, if necessary, his very life. He can also, thanks to his extraordinary strength and agility, escape capture repeatedly and live for years in the wilderness with the wind and rain as his companions.¹⁰⁷

Ruhlmann stresses the noble character of the *xia* who appear as romantic figures with high principles and sound moral obligations. *Xia* usually flourished in wars or troubled times set in by social disorder or political upheaval, taking justice into their own hands by killing the local ruffians and corrupt officials and banding together against the government. Private guards who turned into soldiers of the government during troubled times may accidentally appear as protectors of the common people when confronting great dangers. Ruhlmann, therefore, suggests that this type of *xia* in fiction be treated as an idealized image of the intermediate-stage swordsman.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 170.

Hegel's picture of the *xia* in Chinese popular literature comes from studying novels of seventeenth-century China. Compared to Blader, Hegel seems to have gone one stage beyond. Rather than only pointing out how the "heroes" fit into the Ruhlmann's category of "Swordsman", Hegel uses "swordsmen" as a direct translated term for *xia*. He alone, as far as the present study shows, seems to have applied both the terms "swordsmen" or "knights-errant" interchangeably to the *xia* described in novels in seventeenth century China. Unlike the others, he makes a distinction between "stalwarts" or "outstanding men" and "swordsmen" or "knights-errant", identifying the former and latter as two distinct types.¹⁰⁸ The "stalwarts" or "outstanding men" (*haojie* 豪傑) are characters 'of highest moral principles, resolute in their application of these principles,' whereas "swordsmen" or "knights-errant" (*xia*) are 'men of courage and personal dedication whose reckless altruism all too frequently complicates further the wrongs they strive to right.'¹⁰⁹ While Hegel perceives both "stalwarts" or "outstanding men" and "swordsmen" or "knights-errant" as positive characters in the seventeenth-century novel *Sui shi yi wen* 《隋史遺文》, Forgotten Tales of the Sui, he still makes a distinction between the two types of characters:

The former ["stalwarts" or "outstanding men"] [is preferred] for their cool-headed resourcefulness and integrity; the latter ["swordsmen" or "knights-errant"], often bunglers despite their good intentions. The former tend toward paragons of social consciousness in a Confucian sense; the latter are more often the Chinese version of the "rugged individualist," free spirits who act in accordance with their (frequently dimmed) personal lights. While stalwarts can and do lead men, swordsmen here must be under the firm guidance of other, more socially conscious individuals who

¹⁰⁸ Examples of these two distinct types are found in the stories of Qin Shubao 秦叔寶 and Cheng Yaojin 程咬金. Details are given in Hegel, *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China*, pp. 130-39. According to Hegel, Qin Shubao's attempts to establish himself in the world involve his adoption of various behavioural models and his assumption of several social roles. In his earlier years the models he pursues are "stalwarts" or "outstanding men" and "swordsmen" or "knights-errant" (p.130) and by the time he retires from office for a respite with his family, he is finally a fully realized stalwart while Cheng Yaojin remains a "swordsman" hero throughout. See also his 'Maturation and Conflicting Values: Two Novelists' Portraits of the Chinese Hero Ch'in Shu-pao', in *Critical Essays on Chinese Fiction*, ed. by Winston L.Y. Yang and Curtis Adkins (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1980), pp. 115-50, particularly pp. 134-38.

¹⁰⁹ Hegel, *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China*, p. 130.

control their destructive impulses. Neither type is automatically above reproach, however; each is morally complex as a group, if not individually.¹¹⁰

Hegel also remarks that 'characters of the swordsman type do not believe in spirits, conceptions of human events based on Yin-Yang theory, or physiognomy. Stalwarts, on the other hand, are distinguished for their ability to discern the time appropriate for action.'¹¹¹ He finds the "swordsmen" or "knights-errant" and "stalwarts" or "outstanding men" belonging to two sharply distinct social groups, the "swordsmen" being the more base of heroes in the novels for they are 'rationalists who will not hear of fate, are, mostly, if not all, of the poorer working class', and it is the "stalwarts" who 'perceive the will of Heaven; they include literate men, large landowners, and trusted officials.'¹¹² Like Wilkinson, who depicts the *xia* as a socially more inferior group in relation to a socially more superior one in society; Hegel portrays them as morally more base, in contrast to a morally more superior group in society.

Perry E. Link's picture of the *xia* comes from studying modern martial arts fiction -- a subgenre of the Mandarin Duck and Butterfly School -- produced in the first few decades of the Republican Era, . Link observes that 'the knight-errant usually comes from, and mingles with, the fringe elements of the lower class -- beggars, bandits, entertainers -- and it is typically his or her role to defend the downtrodden from bullying abuse.'¹¹³ He points out that:

Thus a basic assumption about the knight-errant, like assumptions about "the common man" in the West's Enlightenment, inverts orthodox notions about the source in society of truth and justice. Such virtues may not originate among the

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 137.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 139.

¹¹³ Link, *Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies*, p.p. 37-38.

elite and filter down, as it were, but may originate among the downtrodden who occasionally force them upward.¹¹⁴

Link describes the knight-errant's extraordinary abilities and semi-mysterious manner as:

With unreal ease the knight-errant appears and disappears from view, as well as from the pale of normal human understanding. He or she has connections with high principles which are perfectly real and exist everywhere, but are accessible only to those who attain a certain clarity of mind. This clarity helps them make brisk and correct judgments even in very confusing situations.

These special abilities, both mental and physical, are a matter of occult training as well as inborn talent.¹¹⁵

One could perhaps lament that the *xia* figure, originally belonging to the nobility practising knight-errantry over two millenia ago, has been reduced to a disparaged group springing only from the lower class of the present, rarefied by their superhuman abilities.

Regarding the complexity of situating the *xia* in historical or idealized fictional works each in its respective political and socio-cultural contexts as Ho Ping-ti believes it is the rightful approach to adopt in order to have a firm grasp on the meaning of *xia* in the past, Ma Yau-woon believes that another dimension -- literary traditions -- need to be taken into account before a full understanding of the *xia* in Chinese popular literature can be obtained. Ho Ping-ti claims that the knights-errant in Chinese society are history-bound. But Ma's study of the Chinese knights-errant in *huaben* stories led him to conclude otherwise:

The knights-errant who appear in *hua-pen* [huaben] stories are not history-bound. Rather, they are bound by long-standing traditions (such as the image of female knights-errant from T'ang tales), by the readers' expectations of the knight-errant (valor, deadly fighting skills, sense of justice, and the like), by the stylistic and contextual features required of the genre (action-packed episodes, black-and-white

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 38.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

contrasts between heroes and villains, etc.) and by the availability of stock motifs (for instance, the invariable majestic appearance of the knight-errant) and stock situations (like establishing credentials through combat).¹¹⁶

In summary, the analysis of data in this part of the study on the interpretation and translation of the term *xia* and its variants in the domains of Chinese philosophy, history, and literature seems to suggest that the translation of *xia* falls into two broad categories -- transliteration and translation. Transliteration is generally preferred when references are made to actual historical happenings in the past, whether in the studies of Chinese philosophy or history. Transliteration is also preferred when the *xia* is addressed as a key term in the text; or when the text under study, in fact, evolves around the central concept of *xia*. Under such circumstances, explicating the text itself is sufficient to lead to a meaningful study of the *xia* in question. Not to be dismissed is the nature of the text itself and the audience targetted. It may also be safely assumed that the more academic, albeit specialized the text and the more specialized the audience, the more readily can the transliteration method be resorted to as a translational tool. This study also seems to suggest that historical facts could possibly determine the choice for transliteration. On the other hand, direct translation into familiar and common English terms seems to predominate in fictitious texts where the primary concern seems to acquaint readers with a possible equivalent at the first instant so as to help them to surmount hurdles likely to be encountered in the remaining parts of the text. Historical texts also use direct translation to a certain extent. But adopting a direct translation method for the *xia* and its variants still leaves translators with a large number of possible alternatives for appropriate terms in English, making them to move onto what Jiri Lev termed yet another level in the decision-making process.¹¹⁷ Translational choices are then determined drawing on either convention, convenience, or other contextual information the translators may take into

¹¹⁶ Ma, 'The Knight-Errant in *Hua-pen* Stories', pp. 297-98.

¹¹⁷ Jiri Lev, 'Translation as a Decision Process', in *To Honor Roman Jakobson: Essays on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday* (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), II, 1171-82. Found also in Andrew Chesterman, ed. *Readings in Translation Theory* (Helsinki: Oy Finn Lectura AB, 1989), pp. 37-52.

consideration in the interpretation process, along with reader profile and translational functions.

Chapter Six

Generic Difficulties in Translating Martial Arts Fiction

Martial arts fiction, as a major genre, particularly in contemporary Chinese literature, warrants an introduction to the reading public of other countries, firstly, as a literary form in its own right, and secondly as a vehicle for transmitting Chinese cultural values. My venture into rendering one of Jin Yong's works, *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, into English was motivated primarily by the challenge waiting in store for whoever is going to attempt translating martial arts fiction into a foreign language, and by the seemingly insurmountable obstacles one would run into in transferring to an alien culture the multifarious facets of Chinese culture in martial arts fiction, be they philosophical teachings, classical allusions, historical anecdotes, religious beliefs, oriental cults, metaphysical truths, and traditional values and customs.

Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain first appeared as a newspaper serial in 1959 and was later published as one single volume (rev. eds 1974, 1977). This martial arts novel, containing ten chapters, is a little over two hundred pages long, with relatively little fighting compared to Jin Yong's other novels, and yet the excitement, intrigue and action are well dramatized in this beautifully written work, with one event firmly intertwining with other incidents in the story, a vendetta involving the offspring of several families. The story sketches a historical setting which Western readers should not find too difficult to grasp, and yet the story itself is filled with sufficient oriental mysticism and feats of strength to fascinate the Western mind. The uniqueness of this title lies in its being one story woven from several stories. Every chapter is a story in itself, with the more important ones centering on one single incident in the past, an incident which is told, and sometimes re-told by different eye-witnesses, from different angles and perspectives, hence giving rise to several versions of the same story. The reader is able, however, to weave all threads of individual stories together. What sustains the interest of the reading public is the suspense introduced in closing the last

chapter of the story. The story ends at the point when Fox, the hero, raises his weapon to strike. This book is a never-ending story, with much left to the imaginative and creative powers of individual readers.

According to Lefevere, the two factors which basically determine the image of a work of literature as projected by a translation are the translator's ideology and the poetics dominant in the receiving literature at the time the translation is made.¹ He further points out that 'ideology and poetics particularly shape the translator's strategy in solving problems raised by elements in the Universe of Discourse of the original and the linguistic expression of that original.'² Ideology is taken here more in a sense of what Jameson espouses as 'that grillwork of form, convention, and belief which orders our actions'³, rather than the political sphere. Besides Lefevere's concept of ideology and poetics, Hans Vermeer also claims that the skopos of translational action determines translational strategy,⁴ as does Roda Roberts who introduces the concept of function of translation in deciding the translator's strategy.⁵ The analysis of *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* as translated text that follows will be confined here to only these concepts pertaining to translational strategy introduced by Lefevere, Vermeer, and Roberts.

To produce a "literary translation", rather than "translated literature" out of a piece of literary text would seem an ideal skopos to one tackling an original genre alien to the

¹ Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, p. 41.

² Ibid., p. 48.

³ Fredric Jameson, *The Prison House of Language* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 107, quoted in ibid, p. 16.

⁴ Hans Vermeer, 'Skopos and Commission in Translational Action', in *Readings in Translation Theory*, ed. by Andrew Chesterman (Helsinki: Oy Finn Lectura Ab, 1989), pp. 173-87. See also Christiane Nord, 'Scopos, Loyalty, and Translational Conventions', *Target*, 3.1 (1991), 91-109.

⁵ Roda P. Roberts, 'The Concept of Function of Translation and Its Application to Literary Texts', *Target*, 4.1 (1992), 1-16.

target culture. Lefevere is quick to remind us, 'Not all translated literature is accepted as a "literary translation" in the culture into which it is translated, i.e. as a work of literature that can take its place among other works of literature belonging to that culture.'⁶ Thus, a more realistic skopos to define this particular translational act would be bringing Jin Yong's work to life for a Western audience. It follows that the functions associated with translating this literary text would include introducing martial arts fiction as a literary genre; introducing Jin Yong as a master storyteller; and presenting genre-specific devices employed in penning a classic work. The ideological dictates pertaining to convention would require this translator to adhere closely to the original, to translate everything, to dispense with footnotes, and to observe also that aspect of current English-language translation, as:

A translated text is judged successful -- by most editors, publishers, reviewers, readers, by translators themselves -- when it reads fluently, when it gives the appearance that it is not translated, that it is the original, transparently reflecting the foreign author's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text.⁷

Following this convention, fluent translation strategy, which requires 'a laborious effort of revision and much stylistic refinement'⁸ would be implemented throughout the text. This strategy, as Venuti continues to observe, 'When successfully deployed, it is the strategy that produces the effect of transparency, wherein the translation is identified with the foreign text and evokes the individualistic illusion of authorial presence.'⁹ Besides convention for translation, personal belief manifesting itself as another ideological dictate would also contribute to shaping the translator's strategy. To the translator, the 'Chineseness' which marks the genre is to be retained at all costs. For

⁶ André Lefevere, 'Literary Theory and Translated Literature', *Dispositio*, 7.19-20 (1982), 3-22 (p. 4).

⁷ Lawrence Venuti, introduction, *Rethinking Translation*, ed. by Lawrence Venuti (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 1-17 (p. 4).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

what distinguishes a classic martial arts novel is its 'Chineseness', created in part by the enigma associated with the seemingly cryptic and elusive language used in penning this genre. The 'Chineseness', namely, cultural elements which impart to martial arts its peculiar flavour and taste, to borrow Eugene Eoyang's terms,¹⁰ is found, in part, inherent in the Chinese language itself and in part in the Chinese culture inherent in martial arts fiction proper, both of which are to be transposed across linguistic and cultural boundaries in translation. One overriding strategy thus taking shape is that the translator would try to retain as much as possible the details of the story without sacrificing the flow of the narrative while capturing as much as possible the flavour and spirit of a classic martial arts fiction. Finally, regarding poetics in the receiving culture, English literary traditions of prose fiction already boast a long literary history that can offer the translator a full repertoire for crafting a new genre in the target language.

An overriding strategy adopted by the translator proved to be extensive rewriting into the target language. *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* only materialized after serious efforts at recreative translating. Take for instance, a scene in Chapter 10 which describes Fox, a protagonist in the story, making his way uphill to meet Phoenix, his deadly enemy and another protagonist, in combat, as shown:

Original: 他順著雪地裏的足跡，一路上山，轉了幾個彎，但覺山道越來越險，當下絲毫不敢大意，只怕一個失足，摔得粉身骨碎。奔到後來，山壁間全是凝冰積雪，滑溜異常，竟難有下足之處。

Closely adhering to the text would yield a literal translation which reads:

¹⁰ Eugene Eoyang, 'Beyond Visual and Aural Criteria: The Importance of Flavor in Chinese Criticism', *Critical Inquiry*, 6 (1979), 99-106. In this article Eoyang discusses how form and sound as visual and aural criteria are used in Western literary criticism whereas flavour as smell and taste criteria are used in Chinese literary criticism.

Literal translation: He followed the footprints on the snow and walked all the way up the mountain. After making a few turns, he found the mountain path increasingly treacherous. Thereupon, he dared not take any chance. He was afraid a slip would smash him to pieces. Some time after running uphill, he found the mountains fully covered in frozen thick ice and the path extremely slippery. He even had difficulty planting his feet.

But an attempt at recreative translation which requires extensive rewriting and much stylistic refinement yields a product which reads:

Recreative translation: Fox followed the footprints on the snow, toiling laboriously up the scree slope. After veering several times, the path hugged the brink of a steep fall to one side and frowned upon a cliff on the other. The ice wall fell sheer into the shadows at Fox's feet. Fox told himself not to risk anything. A false step would smash him to pieces. Further up, the cliffs and crevices were buried beneath blue ice, treacherously slippery. (Ch.10, p. 364)

The translator believes that recreative translation, expressed in rich and colourful language, would not only render the text more readable, but also be easy to follow and well-paced. Despite the various stylistic changes called for, such as shifts in subjects and narrative perspectives as illustrated in the example above, the translated text, taken as a whole, would still remain faithful to both the original text and narrative rhythm of the original storyteller. Recreative translation may, sometimes, also necessitate a major restructuring of the different components of a sentence, as shown:

Original: ...雖不識此人，但他這一招「混沌初開」守中有攻，的是內家名手...。

Literal translation: Although one did not know this man, his very move Primordial Unity, which blended offensive moves into defensive ones, certainly was the feat of a master of Inner School.

Recreative translation: Though a new face, he proclaimed himself to be an adept in Inner School. In executing his esoteric Primordial Unity, he wove offensive moves into his defence, blending all moves harmoniously. (Ch. 9, p. 331)

Jin Yong's martial arts novels all relate to a period in traditional China, with historical sketches featuring prominently in his works. The title under study is no exception. The story takes place in the Changbai Range in coldest Manchuria, one winter's morning in 1781. By that time the vast Chinese Empire had come under the imperial rule of the Manchus. The Manchus, a nomadic tribe from Manchuria who ushered in the Qing Dynasty in the mid-seventeenth century, held sway over China from 1644 to 1911. The Manchus brought an end to the Ming Dynasty and the rule of the Chinese Empire by the Han Chinese. With this much background information, one could perhaps take up an example on the relevance of historical background in this translational act. A passage in Chapter 5 reads:

這秘密起因於李闖王大順永昌二年，那年是乙酉年，也就是順治二年。當時胡苗范田四家祖宗言明，若是清朝不亡，須到一百年後的乙丑年，方能洩漏這個大秘密。乙丑年是乾隆十年，距今已有三十餘年...。

A faithful English rendition reads:

The incident took place in the second year of the Reign of Yongchang in the Dashun Dynasty of the Dashing King, being the year Yi You, or the second year during the Reign of Emperor Shunzhi under the Tartar rule. In that year, the forefathers of the four families pledged that, should the Manchu Dynasty survive, the secret should be held back for one hundred years, and could only be divulged in the year Yi Chou, being the tenth year during the Reign of Emperor Qianlong, which was some thirty years ago. (Ch. 5, p. 188)

This translation may read clumsily regarding the dates, underlined as shown above.

The two dates in question, in fact, boil down essentially to two particular years crucial to the story -- 1645 and 1745. In other words, the whole passage could be rephrased as:

The incident took place in 1645. In that year, the forefathers of the four families pledged that, should the Manchu Dynasty survive, the secret should be held back for one hundred years, and could only be divulged in 1745, which was some thirty years ago.

Monolingual English readers may, in fact, find it a lot easier to follow the second version with the dates simplified. Simplifying the dates has not affected the development of the plot in the least. It turns out that this has even helped towards a

more logical reasoning of the meaning conveyed by the passage, making the one-hundred-year period connecting the events more explicit. In contrast to the first version, the second version succeeded only in bringing out in a tacit and straightforward manner the denotative information, the two years in question, falling short as yet in providing readers with a socio-political dimension essential to cushioning the plot as deliberated by the author.

Viewed in the historical and political contexts outlined earlier, the manner in which the dates were introduced into the original text served not only to point out to readers the two specific years in question, but also to enhance the socio-historical atmosphere built up in the story. To those informed and experienced readers of traditional Chinese literature, of historical romance in general and martial arts fiction in particular, the significance of the manner in which the two years are presented means introducing yet another literary function in the text -- that of providing additional background information for a more comprehensive reading of the story, not to mention capturing the original flavour and contributing to recreating, at the same time, the historical atmosphere enveloping the story.

The same translational strategy regarding dates and periods in history applies throughout the text. However, additional information, sometimes in the form of explanatory notes accompanying the text, may be inserted to facilitate easy comprehension, as in:

這是清朝乾隆四十五年三月十五。

It was the fifteenth day of the third month, of the forty-fifth year of the reign of Emperor Qianlong in the Qing Dynasty. (Ch. p. 4)

What the translator has done to make the translation more accessible is to try to bridge the cultural gap by expanding the term "乾隆", intending it to signal not only the name of an emperor in the Qing Dynasty for what it literally stands for, but to embrace also the period reigned by that particular emperor, bringing out, too, the extended but

explicit meaning of the term in the original text. In the example below, the two periods in Chinese history are each given a rough period reckoned in the West. Both the original and its translation read:

天龍門創自清初，原本一支，到康熙年間，掌門人的兩個大弟子不和...

The Dragon Lodge had been founded in the early Qing dynasty, in the mid-seventeenth century. It had started as one single house but at the turn of the eighteenth century, during the Reign of Emperor Kangxi, two elder protégés of the Founder Grand Master had fallen out with each other. (Ch. 1, p. 5)

It is hoped that the two insertions "in the mid-seventeenth century" and "at the turn of the eighteenth century" to account for "the early Qing dynasty" and "during the Reign of Emperor Kangxi" respectively as contained in the original text would provide the Western readers with the necessary, albeit more sensible, time frames to gauge the development of the Dragon Lodge.

Martial arts fiction being so steeped in Chinese culture, one would, therefore, expect to find cultural items or realia found in such novels constituting one of the central issues in the translating process. In "Realia in Translation" (1993), Sider Florin points out that realia are 'words and combinations of words denoting objects and concepts characteristic of the way of life, the culture, the social and historical development of one nation and alien to another.'¹¹ Since they connote local and/or historical colour with no exact matches in other languages, realia, classified thematically, temporally, and geographically according to Florin, therefore, require a special approach.¹² Concurring with Florin, Lauren G. Leighton also observes that realia 'present an especially acute problem of translation as communication' because:

¹¹ Sider Florin, 'Realia in Translation', in *Translation as Social Action: Russian and Bulgarian Perspectives*, trans. and ed. by Palma Zlateva (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 121-28 (p. 123).

¹² Ibid.

Taken as words, realia constitute a problem of linguistics; as objects, concepts, or phenomena, they become a cultural problem of conveying distinctive national character. Because certain objects, concepts, or phenomena are distinctive to a given national culture, the words that designate them are said to exist only in the language of that nation.¹³

Despite difficulties confronting translators in tackling realia in translation, Leighton warns us against avoidance, as 'their erasure from a foreign work results in blandscript or, even worse, in outright nationalization. Yet the immoderate introduction of realia can damage the native language and, simultaneously, make the translation ridiculous.'¹⁴ Leighton would appear to suggest that realia be introduced moderately so as to avoid excessive acculturation on the one hand and outright alienation on the other.

Translators have suggested various strategies for handling problems of linguistic and cultural diffusion. Eugene Nida has identified five types of cultural knowledge for translators, namely, material, religious, social, linguistic, and ecological.¹⁵ Stephen Straight has elaborated on Nida's five broad categories of knowledge required of a translator: ecology, material culture and technology, social organization, mythic patterns, and linguistic structures.¹⁶ Peter Newmark suggests translational devices for cultural items, such as direct transfer, paraphrase or circumlocution, loan translation or calque, transliteration, and footnoting.¹⁷ Vladimir Ivir includes in his procedures for the translation of unmatched elements of culture borrowing, definition, literal translation, substitution, lexical creation, omission, and addition, as well as their various combinations, pointing out also that the choice of a particular procedure is

¹³ Lauren G. Leighton, *Two Worlds, One Art* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991), p. 219. Of particular interest is Chapter 17, 'On Realia', pp. 218-31.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

¹⁵ Eugene E. Nida, 'Linguistics and Ethnology in Translation-Problems', in *Language in Culture and Society*, ed. by Dell Hymes (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), pp. 90-100.

¹⁶ H. Stephen Straight, 'Knowledge, Purpose, and Intuition: Three Dimensions in the Evaluation of Translation', in *Translation Spectrum*, ed. by Marilyn Gaddis Rose (Albany: SUNY Press, 1981), pp. 41-51 (pp. 41-42).

¹⁷ Peter Newmark, *Approaches to Translation* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1981), p. 30-32.

governed by the nature of the cultural term to be translated and the nature of the communicative process in which it appears.¹⁸ C.K. Wang lists five factors, i.e. historical, geographical, social, religious, and literary, for transmission and transformation of Chinese popular traditions.¹⁹ Yo-In Song introduces "the ethnocultural pentad" to examine the nature and function of cultural transfer from Korean, which include the cosmogonic-ecological dimension, the bio-physiological dimension, the psycho-physical dimension, the socio-institutional dimension, and the techno-scientific dimension.²⁰ André Lefevere advances the concept of "cultural scripts" and "universe-of- discourse features" in translation, pointing out that different attitudes developed toward the original, generic expectations, as well as the intended audience all play a part in determining strategies for the translation of universe-of- discourse features.²¹ Javier Franco Aixelá maps out the possible strategies for handling culture-specific items in translation according to the extent of intercultural manipulation required, on a scale 'divided in two major groups, separated by their conservative or substitutive nature, i.e. by the conservation or substitution of the original reference(s) by other(s) closer to the receiving pole.'²² The translator's choice, according to Aixelá, can be accounted for by a series of supratextual, textual, intratextual and 'inherent' variables established.²³

¹⁸ Vladimir Ivir, 'Procedures and Strategies for the Translation of Culture', *International Journal of Translation*, 3.1-2 (1991), 48-60. Appeared earlier in *Translation Across Cultures*, ed. by Gideon Toury (New Delhi: Bahri Publications Private Limited, 1987), pp. 35-46.

¹⁹ C.K. Wang, 'The Transmission and Transformation of Chinese Popular Traditions', *Tamkang Review*, 19.1-4 (1989), 835-45.

²⁰ Yo-In Song, 'Remarks on Cultural Transfer from LLD', *TTR*, 4.1 (1991), 63-79.

²¹ André Lefevere, 'Translation: Universe of Discourse "Holy Garbage, tho by Homer Cook't"', in *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 87-98 (pp. 91-93).

²² Javier Franco Aixelá, 'Culture-Specific Items in Translation', in *Translation, Power, Subversion*, ed. by Román Alvarez and M. Carmen-África Vidal (Clevedon, Philadelphia and Adelaide: Multilingual Matters, 1996), pp. 52-78 (pp. 60-65).

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 65-70.

In his review article of *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, Robert Chard observes:

All martial arts fiction poses challenges for the translator, and Jin Yong's work is no exception. The technical vocabulary of weapons, fighting moves and stances, pressure points for immobilizing an opponent, and the like, rarely have precise English equivalents.²⁴

He further observes that 'also difficult is the rendition of more general concepts familiar to any Chinese reader, but not to Westerners.'²⁵ Jin Yong's martial arts novels are set in traditional China. Most of the protagonists live outside the mainstream of society. The heroes are rebels who live in their own world, who have pledged themselves to a chivalric code of justice, honour and righteousness, even to the point of sacrificing their lives for causes. Adrian Hsia, in his review article, seems to concur with Chard, pointing out that:

It is the job of the translator to render the mentality, code of ethics of the parallel world, and the fighting techniques in a European language which does not have these conventions. The translator requires a high sense of balance in retaining the original flavour without alienating or boring Western readers with things too alien.²⁶

As an example of the 'more general concepts familiar to any Chinese reader, but not to Westerners', Chard cites the term *jianghu* 江湖, explaining how it may pose difficulties for translators:

One example is *jianghu* (literally "rivers and lakes"), the term for the counterculture world of people who exist outside the bounds of normal society -- itinerants, recluses, bandits, rebels, fighters, beggars, performers, healers, pedlars, and the like -- which provides the background for most *wuxia* novels.²⁷

²⁴ Chard, Review, 'Jin Yong: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, (Translated by Olivia Mok)', p. 606.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Adrian Hsia, Review, 'Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain. Jin Yong. Translated by Olivia Mok', p. 36.

²⁷ Chard, Review, 'Jin Yong: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, (Translated by Olivia Mok)', p. 606.

It would appear that Chard is not quite happy with the English term provided in the translation, as he continues:

A translator can either translate the term literally, and explain its full connotations to the reader, or try to find an English equivalent. Mok's "outlawry" does not quite satisfy, as not all members of the *jianghu* are outlaws, and there is another term, *lu lin* 綠林 which refers specifically to the world of robbers.²⁸

Neither is Hua Laura Wu, another reviewer, too happy with "outlaw(ry)" as a translational choice for the Chinese term *jianghu*, a recurrent key word in martial arts fiction, which not only provides a cultural backdrop for the stories, but also invites readers to be mindful of the moral and ethical values inherent in a *jianghu* counterculture in comprehending the conduct of individual protagonists. Wu has gone one step further by suggesting alternatives on several occasions, arguing that:

One always quibbles with the rendering of a word or a line here and there in a translation. My main objection is to the translating of the Chinese term *jianghu* as "outlawry" or "outlaws" (pp. 62, 69, 73, 76, 79, 94, 104, 106, 172, and 189). Since a full-fledged discussion of the term and its translation goes beyond the scope and space of this book review, I shall only point that *jianghu* has a much more general connotation, with a more neutral tone than the English word "outlaw(ry)." Even where "outlawry" or "outlaw" occur in the text, the narrative situation indicates that the fictional characters are by no means all "outlaws." I believe that on these occasions, "martial brotherhood" is a more appropriate rendering.²⁹

Here, Wu seems to be drawing the translator's attention to the importance of contextual information when considering an appropriate translation for *jianghu* as a recurrent term in martial arts fiction, as opposed to the same term being used in other contexts.³⁰

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Hua Laura Wu, p. 147.

³⁰ One example cited here is how *jianghu ji* 《江湖集》, written by one of the most successful novelists during the post-war period, Lu Fen 蘆焚, was rendered into "[Miscellaneous writings]" by Steven P. Day, in Qian Liqun 錢理群, 'An Overview of Chinese Theories of Fiction from the 1940s', trans. Steven P. Day, *Modern Chinese Literature*, 9.1 (1995), 59-78, as Lu Fen said what preoccupied him was "using a conventional narrative style to write a loosely-structured novel" (p.65).

Both Chard and Wu have aptly pointed out that the Chinese term *jianghu*, one among a panoply of 'more general concepts familiar to any Chinese reader, but not to Westerners', may require further explanation with fuller connotations, which, unfortunately, go beyond the scope and space of this dissertation. One could argue that besides the Chinese term *jianghu* 江湖 (literally "rivers and lakes"),³¹ more general concepts such as *wu lin* 武林 (literally "martial grove"),³² *biao ju* 鏢局 (literally "convoy establishment"),³³ and *xing xia zhang yi* 行俠仗義 (literally "dispensing

³¹ For fuller connotations of the Chinese term *jianghu* 江湖 as portrayed in martial arts fiction, see Yi Suihan 易水寒, *Zhongguo jiang hu jie mi* 《中國江湖揭秘》 [Secrets of the Chinese outlawry] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 1993); Shen Ji 沈寂, Dong Changqing 董長卿, and Gan Zhenhu 甘振虎, *Ban xia liu she hui dang an -- tou shi jiang hu ren de mian mu* 《半下流社會檔案 -- 透視江湖人的面目》 [Social files of the semi-underground world -- a portrayal of the characters in the martial world] (Taipei: Rizhen chubanshe, 1994), especially Ch. 1, 'Lu lin da guan yuan 綠林大觀園 [The world of robbers]', pp. 1-22 and Ch. 4, 'Jiang hu lu cang mang 江湖路蒼茫 [Bleak future in the martial world]', pp. 65-143; Leng Xueren 冷學人, *Jiang hu yin yu hang yu de shen mi shi jie* 《江湖隱語行語的神秘世界》 [The secrets of the jargon used by the outlawry] (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1991), pp. 229-74; Li Yaochen 李堯臣 and others, *Ren zai jiang hu* 《人在江湖》 [Life in the martial world] (Hong Kong: Zhongyuan chubanshe, 1990); Lian Kuoru 連闊如, *Jiang hu cong tan* 《江湖叢談》 [Collections on the martial world] (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo chubanshe, 1995); Run Quan 閻泉, compiled, *Jiang hu wen hua* 《江湖文化》 [Culture of the martial world] (Beijing: Zhongguo jingji chubanshe, 1995), pp. 1-127; Wan Laisheng 萬賴聲, *Wu shu hui zong* 《武術匯宗》 [A compendium of martial arts] (Taipei: Commercial, 1982), especially the section 'Biao shi yu jiang hu 鏢師與江湖 [Escorts and the martial world]', pp. 256-65; Wen Zijian 溫子建, compiled, *Wu xia xiao shuo jian shang da dian* 《武俠小說鑒賞大典》 [An encyclopedic dictionary of martial arts fiction] (Guangxi: Lijiang chubanshe, 1994), pp. 530-52; and Zheng Guanglu 鄭光璐, 'Pao jiang hu 跑江湖 [Making a living as a jianghu outlaw]', in *Long men zhen jing xuan I* 《龍門陣精選 I》 [Insiders' knowledge: selected works I] (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1995), pp. 139-53.

³² For fuller connotations of *wu lin* 武林 (literally "martial grove"), see Wen Zijian 溫子建, pp. 678-998 which devotes individual sections to entries on jargon, characters, different schools, and events of the martial world as well as the different types of martial feats developed over the ages by fighters as well as canons on martial feats belonging to different sects and schools. Of particular interest is Shu Guozhi 舒國治, 'Jin Yong de wu yi she hui 金庸的武藝社會 [The martial world of Jin Yong]', in *Du Jin Yong ou de* 《讀金庸偶得》 [Occasional thoughts on reading Jin Yong] (Taipei: Yuanjing chubanshe, 1982), pp. 15-56 which describes the parallel world populated by martial fighters, how the norms prescribed by their society deviate from the those observed by the world we live in.

³³ For fuller connotations of *biao ju* 鏢局 (literally "convoy establishment") as an institution in traditional China, see Qi Rushan 齊如山, 'Biao ju 鏢局 [Convoy]', in *Wen shi zi liao xuan bian* 《文史資料選編》 [Selected materials on history and literature] (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1988), 34, pp. 278-86; Qu Yanbin 曲彥斌, *Zhongguo biao hang* 《中國鏢行》 [Convoys in China] (Shenyang: Liaoning guji chubanshe, 1994); and Fang Biao 方彪, *Biao hang shu shi* 《鏢行述史》 [A descriptive history of convoys] (Beijing: Xiandai chubanshe, 1995). For fuller connotations on how escorts made a living conveying merchandise or guarding mansions for the rich and powerful, see 'Bao biao 保鏢 [Escorts]', in Yi Suihan 易水寒, pp. 91-93; 'Bao biao sheng ya 保鏢生涯 [Lives of the escorts]', in Li Yaochen 李堯臣, pp. 1-21; 'Bao biao lu kan ke 保鏢路坎坷 [Hardships in the lives of the escorts]', in Shen Ji 沈寂, Dong Changqing 董長卿, and Gan Zhenhu 甘振虎, pp. 23-46; 'Biao shi yu jiang hu 鏢師與江湖 [Escorts and the martial world]', in Wan Laisheng 萬賴聲, pp. 256-65; and Lian Kuoru 連闊如, pp. 305-

knight-errantry and upholding righteousness"),³⁴ should also be explained with fuller connotations throughout the text.

Of the few Chinese technical terms cited above, *biao ju* 鏢局 appears to have been better explained in English texts than the others. Commenting on the *xia* figures in Chinese fiction in his "Traditional Heroes in Chinese Popular Fiction" (1960), Ruhlmann introduces the institution *biao ju* 鏢局 into the text, as he observes:

The place of rebels and *hsia* [*xia*] in Chinese fiction is to be understood in relation to a recurrent, if unofficial, institution, that of the private guards hired by merchants and village notables for escorting goods and for help in other businesses requiring *manu militari* handling.³⁵

In *The Chinese Knight-errant* (1967), James J.Y. Liu believes that the decline and transformation of knights-errant may be attributed to the growth of *biao ju* 鏢局 as an institution in traditional China, remarking that:

The decline of knight-errantry may have had some connection with the rise of a system of insurance and armed escort of goods in transit, known as *pao-piao* [*bao biao* 保鏢], or "armed protection".³⁶ Under this system, an insurance

10 which describes convoy trips taken by escorts, while pp. 316-25 describes how escorts retire to a life of guarding mansions for wealthy merchants or government officials. What remained of one of the now defunct convoy establishments in Beijing is found in Zou Xian 鄒憲, 'Yuanshun biao ju jin you zai / da dao Wang Wu you hou ren 源順鏢局 今猶在 大刀王五 有後人 [Yuanshun Convoy still stands here today, while Wang Wu the Broadsword is survived by his offspring]', *Ming Pao* 《明報》, 13 February, 1996, C4.

³⁴ See Timothy C. Wong, 'The Virtue of Yi in Water Margin', *Journal of Oriental Literature* 7 (1966), 49-52 and 'Xing xia kai lun 行俠概論 [introduction to dispensing knight-errantry]', in Wan Laisheng 萬賴聲, pp. 254-56.

³⁵ Ruhlmann, p. 172.

³⁶ James J.Y. Liu explains this term further in an additional note in *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 210:

The word *piao* [*biao*] is written 鏢 or 鏢 and is generally understood to be a kind of weapon resembling a dart. Thus, *piao-k'ê* [*biao ke* 鏢客] means "traveller armed with *piao* [*biao* 鏢]. But it seems strange to call the profession of armed escorts *pao-piao* [*bao biao* 保鏢] or "protecting the *piao* [*biao* 鏢]", since the *piao* [*biao* 鏢] was not the object but the means of protection. Perhaps we should adopt the second form of writing *piao* [*biao* 鏢] and take it in its original sense of "horse's bit", in which case *pao-piao* [*bao biao*] would mean "protecting the horse" (by synecdoche). Another possibility, suggested by my friend Mr. Chang Hsün, is that *piao* [*biao*] should be written 標, meaning "sign" or "mark", and *pao-piao* [*bao biao*] means

company, call *piao-chü* [*biao ju* 鑣局], would undertake to guard good in transit and make good the loss if anything was lost on the way. The armed escorts were called *piao-k'ê* [*biao ke* 鑣客] or "armed travellers", who were usually men of fine swordsmanship and chivalrous temperament. In popular chivalric tales and plays of the Ch'ing [Qing] period, the heroes are often such armed escorts, who also act as bodyguards of upright officials. Though this is fiction, it probably reflects what actually happened.³⁷

Stanley E. Henning traces the rise of *biao ju* 鑣局 to the middle 1800s in his article "The Chinese Martial Arts in Historical Perspective" (1981), pointing out that:

The Chinese landscape had become a panorama of conflict, racked by incessant civil strife, foreign incursions, and natural catastrophes resulting in famine and widespread banditry, especially in the northern provinces. Local militia were raised, trained, and disbanded according to the exigencies of the moment. Private protection agencies (*biaoju*) flourished. Run by professional martial artists, they served to escort transported goods and to protect the homes of the wealthy, banks, pawn shops, and other commercial enterprises.³⁸

James J.Y. Liu, however, is more inclined to push Henning's date further back, for 'the earliest reference to the *piao-k'ê* [*biao ke* 鑣客] that I know occurs in Kao Shih-ch'i's *T'ien-lu Chih-yü* or *Miscellaneous Notes of a Court Librarian* (1690).'³⁹ He also suggests that:

It seems possible that about this time many knights-errant became professional armed escorts, and thus, ironically enough, became guardians of the law instead of law-breakers. However, the ideals of knight-errantry were not totally lost: no chivalrous-minded armed escort would consent to be the bodyguard of a corrupt official or oppress the poor.⁴⁰

James J.Y. Liu describes Grandfather Teng the Ninth 鄧九公 in Wen Kang's 文康 *Er nu ying xiong zhuan* 《兒女英雄傳》 [A tale of heroic lovers] as 'a retired professional

"protecting the trade mark", since the armed escorts used to display a flag bearing the sign of their firm.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 53.

³⁸ Stanley E. Henning, 'The Chinese Martial Arts in Historical Perspective', *Military Affairs*, 45 (1981), 173-78 (p.176).

³⁹ James J.Y. Liu, *The Chinese Knight-errant*, p. 53.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

armed escort, he is magnanimous, boisterous, ready to help others, and childishy vain of his heroic reputation and his long white beard.⁴¹ Liu, likewise, describes Big Sword Wang the Fifth 大刀王五 in Pingjiang Buxiaosheng's 平江不肖生 *Jin dai xia yi ying xiong zhuan* 《近代俠義英雄》 [Chronicles of modern knights-errant and altruists] as 'a professional armed escort, [who] accompanied an outspoken Imperial Censor who had offended the Empress Dowager on his way to exile, and looked after his family, though the two were not even acquainted.'⁴²

Convoy establishments, such as Peking Overland Convoy (平通鑣局) mentioned in *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, in fact, were a unique commercial venture in traditional China. Quite a number of martial arts specialists sold their services to such establishments as armed escorts. Convoys were set up in ancient China to deliver valuables and to convey merchandise of great worth for the rich. Escorts employed by these convoys were invariably well-versed in martial arts, particularly in dispatching enemies with darts. These escorts were hired not only to protect travellers on long journeys across the country, but also the merchandise entrusted to their care. Convoy as an establishment can be likened to the present-day Securicor. Below is a typical description of animosity involving a convoy found in martial arts fiction,

看敵人時，見當先一人身形瘦削，漆黑一團，認得是北京平通鑣局的總鑣頭熊元獻，此人精熟地堂刀。飲馬川山寨曾劫過他鑣局的一支大鑣，熊元獻使盡心機，始終沒能要回，是以雙方結下梁子。

One of the enemies was thin and of swarthy complexion. He could be distinguished as Prime Xiong, Chief Escort of the Peking Overland Convoy. He was proficient in the Ground Blade, the art of fencing with a broadsword. Bandits from Horse Spring had once robbed his establishment of merchandise of great worth. He had tried every possible means to recover the lost merchandise, but had never succeeded. The incident sowed the seeds of animosity between the two parties. (Ch. 1, p. 18)

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 129.

⁴² Ibid., p. 136.

Like other contemporary martial arts fiction, Jin Yong's works abound in genre-specific concepts, which are terms relating to social relations, customs, or institutions that are familiar to any Chinese reader, but not to Westerners. As pointed out in Chapter 5, "*xia* 俠" as a cultural concept is a recurring theme in martial arts fiction. Running closely parallel to *xia* is another concept "*yi* 義", long considered a highly desirable personal attribute in traditional China and also a virtue among those claimed to be practising knight-errantry in martial arts fiction. Fung Yu-lan explains that, in *yi* or righteousness,

Anything which conduces to the benefit of society or of others, this is an unconditional obligation. And any action which in any way conduces to such benefit, this is from the moral standpoint the best method of transacting any business.⁴³

Nowhere is this concept of "*yi*" better explained than when it appears as the underlying theme in a Chinese novel of the Yuan dynasty, *Water Margin* or *All Men Are Brothers* as known to some. To Pearl Buck's question as to how can all one hundred and eight different characters in the band be Brothers, Timothy C. Wong suggests that the answer lies in "*yi*", as this is 'the virtue of righteousness and the only common attribute and spirit of the band, a virtue referred to with great frequency in the novel's descriptions of each of its heroic characters.'⁴⁴ And to this day, this concept of "*yi*" remains as alive as ever. Adrian Hsia extols *yi* as a virtue of 'one's loyalty toward one's friends'.⁴⁵ Commenting on the degree of popularity *yi* continues to enjoy today, he observes that 'it is a social virtue, found and practiced in all social situations by people of all walks of life, even by people as different as policeman and gangsters. With "*xiao*" -- filial piety

⁴³ Fung Yu-lan, *The Spirit of Chinese Philosophy*, trans. E.R. Hughes (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962), p. 14.

⁴⁴ Timothy C. Wong, p. 49.

⁴⁵ Adrian Hsia, 'The Orphan of the House Zhao in French, English, German, and Hong Kong', *Comparative Literature Studies*, 25.4 (1988), 335-51 (p. 347).

-- (only applicable to an ever increasing number of related generations) "yi" has emerged as the most important virtue, especially in Hong Kong.⁴⁶

But more pertinent to the treatment of this translated text is Yang Lien-sheng's dissection of *yi* as an ethical code of true knights-errant. He claims that:

According to the ethical code of genuine knights-errant, although they themselves were entirely dependable in returning the kindness of others, they would not expect any reward when they did favors to others. Many of them would even reject such a reward. This virtue is called *i[yi]*, which is normally rendered "righteousness," but here it is used in a special sense referring to any virtue that is above the normal requirement.⁴⁷

Yang substantiated his claim by quoting Fung Yu-lan who, in analysing this meaning of *yi*, espoused the view that 'people who are said to practice *hsia[xia]*, or *i[yi]*, adopt a standard of conduct which is sometimes higher than what is prescribed by morality in the society.'⁴⁸

Karsten Lomholt identifies different approaches to translating terms designating a specific concept in the text. Her study grew out of translating an Urdu book on Islam from 1892, a text tinged with strong mysticism which led her to formulate different strategies for a key concept in various contexts. Lomholt's different approaches include: (1) translation according to context if a word admits more than one rendering; one rendering throughout if the key function of the term is evidently significant in the text, (2) explanatory translation, (3) transliteration or bogus translation so as to let the text define the term, (4) explanation in a footnote, (5) using an established translation, (6) translation according to a definition in the text as the text may provide definition, and (7)

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 348.

⁴⁷ Yang Lien-sheng, 'The Concept of "Pao" as a Basis for Social Relations in China', p. 296.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

use of established target language expressions⁴⁹ All of Lomholt's different approaches considered, explanatory translation is to be preferred for the cultural concepts "xia" and "yi" for they embody personal qualities and moral and ethical values covering a wide range. Only by elaborating the terms in question in the right contexts can the translator hope to make clear to readers a sense of the full range of attributes encompassed by these concepts, as shown in the examples below:

- (a) 苗人鳳，你不肯佔人半點便宜，果然稱得上一個“俠”字。

Phoenix, you do not take advantage of others. You believe in fair play. You are indeed the embodiment of high principles and chivalric spirits, and you have the honour of a true knight-errant running in your blood. (Ch. 4, p. 144)

- (b) 你害死元師爺，賣主求榮，還有臉提到義氣兩字？

You have slain the Generalissimo, sold him out to gain wealth and distinction, and yet you still assume airs, bragging about integrity, principles, valiance, altruism, chivalry, loyalty, righteousness, and all the rest! (Ch. 3, p. 100)

- (c) 好，好！有義氣，有義氣。

Brother, very well said. Indeed you have integrity, high principles and heroic spirits in your veins. (Ch. 3, p. 101)

- (d) 多謝各位光臨，足見江湖義氣。

Thank you all for coming to the banquet. This is a real gesture of sworn Brotherhood, a true testimony of our pledge to uphold the great integrity, high principles and heroic spirits of the Martial Brotherhood. (Ch. 3, p.108)

⁴⁹ Karsten Lomholt, 'Problems of Intercultural Translation', *Babel*, 37.1 (1991), 28-35 (pp. 29-30).

- (e) 聽說金面佛行俠仗義，江湖上都叫他苗大俠，總不會害女人孩子吧？

I have heard that the Gilt-faced Buddha is a true acolyte of chivalry. He never hesitates to offer help to those in distress, in the cause both of honour and of justice. His code of conduct and sense of chivalry must be remarkably high for him to merit the title Phoenix the Knight-errant among outlaws of the Martial Brotherhood. I don't think he would harm women and children. (Ch. 4, p. 132)

- (f) 我爹爹卻是將信將疑，素聞胡伯伯行俠仗義，所作所爲很令人佩服，似乎不致於暗算害人。

My father only half believed in the truth of the rumour, having always known Uncle Gully to be a true acolyte of chivalry, high in principles and heroic deeds. He was also spoken of with awe. It seemed most unlikely that Uncle Gully would ever resort to clandestine means to harm people. (Ch. 5, p. 172)

In translating martial arts fiction, one is often dazzled by the vast array of weapons wielded by the protagonists. Matching each of the dozens of edged or clandestine weapons displayed in the novel called for careful research of Chinese weapons and weaponry in the West before an appropriate label in English could be adopted for weapons, such as 羽箭 (arrow), 鋼鋤 (steel hoe), 鐵鏟 (iron spade), 毒錐 (poisoned dart), 袖劍 (sprung barb), 鋼鏢 (steel dart), 飛刀 (dirk), 鋼鞭 (steel rod), 一對鏈子錘 (a pair of chained maces), 雙刀 (twin knives), 戒刀 (Buddhist monk's knife), 雙拐 (a pair of iron staves), 短箭 (barb), 長劍 (sword), 單劍 (single blade), 匕首 (daggers/obelisk), 網兜 (tiny net), 寶刀 (poniard), 金錢鏢 (arhat quoits), 鐵杖 (iron shaft), 單刀 (knife), 彈弓 (catapult), 連珠彈 (bullets), 金鏢 (gold chakrams), 短鏟 (spade), 弓箭 (bow and arrow), and 狼牙棒 (spiked cudgel). Weapons such as the afore-mentioned presented no major problem. Other weapons, however, required an explanatory note, as illustrated in the examples below:

- (a) 當下奔到自己房中，取了當年在江湖上所用的紫金刀．．．

Thereupon, he rushed to his own room, grabbed the broadsword, forged with purple of Cassius, puce in colour, wielded by him when an outlaw but lying disused since. (Ch. 3, p. 76)

(b) 我接住了他七枚連珠鏢....

After catching the seven chakrams darting forth in rapid succession
(Ch. 4, p. 152)

(c) 手裏拿著一根哭喪棒....

In his hands he was holding a staff used by chief mourners. (Ch. 3, p. 107)

Jin Yong, the original author, however, occasionally invented a few weapons of his own. As the translator's knowledge of weaponry is rather limited, as often as not, she failed to differentiate those that owed their origins to the imaginative faculty of the author from those real ones used by warriors and fighters in traditional China. Take for example, a tiny, golden secret weapon known as "*xiaobi* 小筆", literally meaning "small pen", which could be one of the possible inventions of the author for the translator has not yet been able to find out what exactly that weapon is from books on Chinese weapons other than that of the description given in the original text,

那女郎不答，忽然站直身子，手中拿著一根黃澄澄之物，在日光下閃閃發光。曹雲奇走近身去，接了過來，見是一枝黃金鑄成的小筆，長約三寸，筆尖鋒利，打造得甚精緻，筆杆上刻著一個小小的「安」字。這枝金筆看來既是玩物，卻也可作暗器之用....

The lady did not reply but drew herself up to her full height suddenly. In her hand was a thin, golden object that glittered in the sunlight. Curio moved closer, and took it from her. It was a tiny bodkin made of gold, about three inches long, tapering to a sharp point, and of very fine craftsmanship. On the side of the bodkin was engraved a tiny character 'An', meaning 'Peace'. The bodkin looked like a plaything, and at the same time like a secret weapon. (Ch. 1, p. 7)

From the description that it is 'a tiny object, made of gold, about three inches long, tapering to a sharp point, and of very fine craftsmanship', the translator looked through drawings and glossaries of weapons that answered such description and function, used in the West in the eighteenth century as the story is set in the eighteenth century in

traditional China. Finally, a similar weapon in the West called "bodkin" was chosen to designate the Chinese weapon in question.

In the story, fighters often turned objects within easy reach into improvised weapons.

Fox turns the wooden tray from which Lute the maid served wine into a clandestine weapon,

胡斐見那木盤正在他與苗若蘭之間，當即伸出左手，在盤邊輕輕一推，木盤逕向苗若蘭肩上撞去。這一推雖似出手甚輕，其實借勁打人，受著的人若是不加抵禦，就如中了兵刃之傷無異。

Fox instinctively sensed that the wooden tray was placed too close to both him and Orchid. He at once reached out his left hand and gave its edge a slight push, sending the wooden tray lunging straight at Orchid's shoulder. Though very little energy was expended in the pushing, it was channelled propitiously to strike at his enemy. If Orchid failed to ward off the attack in time, the blow would be as fatal as one inflicted by an edged weapon. (Ch. 6, p. 228)

In the final combat between Fox and Phoenix, both duel each other to death with weapons improvised from branches broken off a tree nearby ,

順手在山邊折下兩根極堅硬的樹枝，掂了一掂，重量相若，將一根拋給胡斐，說道：「咱們拳腳難分高下，兵刃上再決生死。」說著樹枝一探，左手捏了劍訣樹枝走偏鋒刺出，使的正是天下無雙、武林絕藝的「苗家劍法」。雖是一根小小樹枝，但刺出時勢夾勁風，又狠又准，要是給尖梢刺上，實也與中劍無異。

Phoenix broke two stiff branches off a tree nearby and felt their weight with his hand and found them to be almost the same. Flinging one wooden rod to Fox, he remarked, "We found it difficult to outmanoeuvre each other in pugilism and footwork. Now let us meet in a death grapple, wielding improvised edged weapons." Gripping the imitation weapon like a sword in his left hand, Phoenix edged the branch to the side and dealt his enemy a backhand stroke. What he was practising were moves unique to the esoteric Swordplay of the Miao Family. Phoenix was duelling with Fox using the unparalleled ultimate prowess of the Martial Brotherhood. The branch, small as it was, was fast and furious, bringing strokes upon the enemy, hurling down gust and gale. The tip of the branch could pierce the body like a sword. (Ch. 10, p. 373)

While care had been exercised to avoid using too modern a term for artifacts in a story set in eighteenth century China, occasional slips, which never failed to escape the scrutinizing eyes of the critic, still remained unavoidable. Adrian Hsia considers the translator's occasional choice of "secret weapon", used interchangeably with "clandestine weapon", a misleading term for "*anqi* 暗器", arguing that

The contemporary reader expects something terrible or extraordinary. The Chinese term "*anqi*" implies only a concealed small weapon which can be thrown at the opponent during a combat. For that purpose, a "secret weapon" is certainly too modern an expression.⁵⁰

Fighting scenes, although featured less in *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, do constitute ingredients essential to martial arts fiction. Descriptions of fighting scenes tend to follow certain conventions, all only being too familiar to any Chinese reader, particularly to seasoned readers. "Sectarianism" tends to dominate the martial world, influencing, too, the behavior and attitudes of individual martial artists. Fighters are given prominent recognition for their martial prowess. There are almost as many sects and schools of fighting as there are Christian denominations in the West, which include *Shaolin* 少林, *Emei* 峨嵋, *Kunlun* 崑崙, and *Wudang* 武當 as mentioned in the story. In the story, the Dragon Lodge has as its esoteric speciality the Dragon Swordplay (天龍劍法), but with the Northern Branch boasting also its own Swordplay of the Northern Branch (北宗劍術) while the Southern Branch its own brand of Levitational Arts (輕功提縱術). The Dragon Lodge not only specializes in the use of poisoned darts, but also boasts an esoteric clandestine weapon called the Lethal Dart (追命毒龍錐), as described in the story,

那毒錐是天龍門世代相傳的絕技，發出時既准且快，而且毒性猛烈，被打中了三個時辰斃命，厲害無比，江湖上送它一個名號，叫作「追命毒龍錐」。

⁵⁰ Adrian Hsia, Review, '*Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*. Jin Yong. Translated by Olivia Mok', p. 36.

The use of poisoned darts, had for generations, been one of the esoteric killer tricks on which the Dragon Lodge prided itself. They flew true and fast and the poison was extremely potent. It could kill its victim within three watches. The outlawry called it the Lethal Dart. (Ch. 1, pp. 16-17)

Individual families may also have established themselves in wielding a particular kind of weapon; important ones in the story being the Swordplay of the Miao Family (苗家劍法) and the Hu's Knife Techniques (胡家刀法), long considered esoteric specialties of individual families; always well-guarded, practised and passed only onto rightful members of the family. Each family, in turn, boasts and develops uncanny moves unique to wielding the weapon of their choice. In the conversation below between Gully and his wife,

「...他的劍法之中，你說那幾招最厲害？」胡一刀道：「厲害招數很多，好比洗劍懷中抱月、迎門腿反劈華山、提撩劍白鶴舒翅、沖天掌蘇秦背劍...」夫人道：「毛病就出在提撩劍白鶴舒翅這一招上。」胡一刀道：「這一招以攻爲守，剛中有柔，狠辣得緊啊。」夫人道：「大哥，你用穿手藏刀、進步連環刀、纏身摘心刀這些招式時，他有時會用提撩劍白鶴舒翅反擊....」

"...Which move, of his swordplay as a whole, do you find the most threateningly mortal?"

Gully replied, "Quite a number of his moves are deadly threatening. Take for instance, Wiping Out Embracing the Moon; Caveating in Hewing the Mammoth Mountain; Piercing the Stork in Flight; Punching the Sky Carrying the Sword, and so on."

Gully's wife interrupted him. "It is precisely this move, Piercing the Stork in Flight, that gave him away."

Gully immediately broke in, "This very move enables Phoenix to turn an offensive move into defensive stance, shrouding delicacy with its mighty blows, and it is piercingly threatening."

His wife then suggested, "My lord, while you were practising moves such as Stealing Blade from the Side; Plunging to Lunge in Quick Succession, and Entangling to Transfix the Heart, Phoenix occasionally launched a counter-parade practising the move of Piercing the Stork in Flight" (Ch. 4, p.161)

What Gully is telling his wife is that he finds certain moves of the Swordplay of the Miao Family deadly threatening; while his wife tells him how Phoenix reacted to specific moves of the Hu's Knife Techniques. Individual fighters may also claim an esoteric speciality of their own.

Moves are stylised movements in fighting, made to resemble certain actions, often of animals, to facilitate learning and retention. Instead of following through the movements choreographed for a particular move, the fighter may, instead, suddenly resort to producing an erratic move, thereby inventing a new move, as illustrated in the duel between Gully and Phoenix in their five-day duel,

當下使一招「沙鷗掠波」，本來是先砍下手刀，再砍上手刀，但我爹爹故意變招，先砍上手刀，再砍下手刀。

胡伯伯一怔，剛說得聲：「不對！」我爹爹叫道：「看刀！」單刀陡然翻起，第二刀下手刀竟又變爲上手刀。這是他自創的刀法，雖是脫胎於胡家刀法，但新奇變幻，令人難測。

In a moment, my father brought off the Seagull Skimming the Lake, intending first a defensive blow, followed by an instantaneous offensive stroke. But he suddenly resorted to an expedient and erratic move, smiting first with the offensive stroke, then with the defensive blow. Uncle Gully was caught completely off-guard by this surprise move of father's.

"Wrong move!" blurted out Uncle Gully.

"Watch out!" warned his enemy immediately.

Twirling his blade, my father likewise substituted the defensive blow with another expedient, offensive stroke. This strange move of his was his latest martial innovation, which owed its origin to one of the moves borrowed from the Hu's Knife Techniques. This newly-invented move was highly unusual, making it deceptively unpredictable. (Ch. 5. p. 175)

After the Lodge and the Hu and Miao Families, individual fighters, as far as martial skills go, may also distinguish themselves in special feats of fighting, thus claiming a name for themselves. For example, Fan the Ringleader claims as his speciality the

Grappling Claws of the Dragon (龍爪擒拿手); Whiz the Eight Diagram Pugilism (八卦掌) and Eight Diagram Knife (八卦刀); Jiang the Senior Mentor in Pugilism the Unfathomable Pugilism (無極拳); and the twins the Bodhidharma Swordplay of the Shaolin Monastery (少林派的達摩劍法). Even the lady fighter Third has distinguished herself in the Iron Bolt (鐵門門刀法),

那知鄭三娘的武藝雖不甚精，卻練了一套專門守御的刀法，只要這套「鐵門門」刀法使開了，六六三十六招之內，對方功夫再高，也是不易取勝。曹雲奇連變三路劍法，一時竟奈何她不得。

Though Third was no adept in martial arts, she was thoroughly trained in a whole series of moves for fencing with knives -- the Iron Bolt. Practising any of the thirty-six moves in this series, she was able to shield herself against any advancing opponent. Even if her assailant were proficient in martial arts, he still would have difficulty striking her. In his attack, Curio resorted to switching quickly to three different styles of attack with the sword, but failed in all attempts. (Ch. 1, p. 28)

Martial arts fiction being what it is, concise action verbs relating to fighting with different weapons, or combatting by resorting to pugilism or footwork are employed, implying too, that the translator may have to be more sensitive on this aspect of universe of discourse in English culture. Action verbs relating to fighting with a sword, a knife and bare-fisted are illustrated below:

- (a) 劍訣有云：「高來洗，低來擊，裏來掩，外來抹，中來刺。」這「洗、擊、掩、抹、刺」五字，是各家劍術共通的要訣。

The key to swordplay was in eliminating the opponents when attacked from above; smiting blows if attacked from below; taking the enemies by surprise when attacked from within the circle; swiping if attacked from outside the circle; thrusting at the enemies when attacked halfway from the centre. These five tricks of Elimination, Smiting, Taking by Surprise, Swiping, and Thrusting were common to swordplay of all schools. (Ch. 2, p. 68)

- (b) 至於「展、抹、鉤、剝、砍、劈」六字訣，更是變幻莫測。

The six movements of Whirling, Swiping, Hooking, Scraping, Hewing and Hacking, being the cardinal rules of wielding a knife, allow martial artists an endless display of moves and movements that are mysteriously unfathomable. (Ch. 4, p. 146)

- (c) 展開大擒拿手法，鎖、錯、閉、分，尋瑕抵隙，來奪二童手中兵刃。

He snatched the weapons from the lads' hands with his pugilistic skills in grappling, in that special branch known as the Grappling Hand -- Locking, Confusing, Encircling, and Diverting, attacking and resisting his assailants. (Ch. 2, p. 63)

Discussion in this chapter centred, in the main, on how generic difficulties found in the translating process may be attributed to the genre-specific universe of discourse in martial arts fiction, with artefacts often not found in the West and concepts too alien to the target audience. Strategies relating to solving these difficulties may include finding matching realia in the West or adding heavy explanatory notes to the text. The translator has to try to get these realia or concepts across linguistic and cultural boundaries, rendering the translation more accessible to a Western audience. But accessibility of a translated text may go beyond these boundaries, requiring also shared knowledge of the reader. The following chapter will examine how cultural assumptions, or a reader's shared knowledge, can help contribute to a better reading of martial arts fiction.

Chapter Seven

From Translating to Reading Martial Arts Fiction

This chapter will centre, in the main, on post-translational issues, on what possible problems may arise in the reading process, especially those confronting general, or non-specialist, readers. Examples will be drawn, again, mostly from *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* by Jin Yong. As martial arts fiction is a subgenre of Chinese fiction, some of the issues related to the translating and reading process will be examined in the larger context of Chinese fiction in English translation.

Achilles Fang's comment that 'the problem of translation may be treated from three angles: adequate comprehension of the translated text, adequate manipulation of the language translated into, and what happens in between',¹ as illustrated by examples of translating classical Chinese texts into English, could perhaps be extended to include, as in the present case on discussion of martial arts fiction in English translation, what happens afterwards, how the English translation is understood or interpreted by the target readers. Critics may provide us with some insights as to why Chinese fiction may fail to work in translation, as pointed out below.

In "Classical Chinese Fiction in the West: 1960-1980" (1980), Winston L.Y. Yang observes that some of the problems encountered in the translation of classical Chinese fiction in the West in the 1980s include the application of Western theory to the interpretation of Chinese literary history,² the question of approaches to the translation of Chinese fiction, the critical need for more and better translations, and the challenging task for scholars and translators to introduce Chinese fiction to a much broader

¹ Achilles Fang, 'Some Reflections on the Difficulty of Translation', in *Studies in Chinese Thoughts*, ed. by Arthur F. Wright (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1953), pp. 263-85 (p. 263).

² See also D. Malone, 'Cultural Assumptions and Western Literary Criticism', *Tamkang Review*, 6.2/7.1 (1975-76), 55-67.

readership, when appreciation of Chinese fiction is still confined to a small group of Western readers.³

Yang seems to emphasize both the role of the reader as well as the translator of fiction in the target culture. Wolfgang Iser introduces the term "implied reader" which 'incorporates both the prestructuring of the potential meaning by the text, and the reader's actualization of this potential through the reading process.'⁴ In *The Role of the Reader* (1979), after pointing out that 'to make his text communicative, the author has to assume that the ensemble of codes he relies upon is the same as that shared by his possible reader,' Umberto Eco then states that 'at the minimal level, every type of text explicitly selects a very general model of possible reader' whom he termed the Model Reader.⁵ It would appear that the reader's contribution to the reading process could not be emphasized more. Commenting on four English translations of contemporary literature from Mainland China, Liu Shaoming 劉紹銘 [Joseph S.M. Lau] observes that the American writer Annie Dillard could not finish a contemporary Chinese work as reading Chinese was an "acquired taste".⁶ Tom Shippey even points out that readers have to learn how to read science fiction in the original language.⁷ A Taiwan publisher has brought out a Jinology series (金學) devoted to studying Jin Yong's martial arts

³ Winston L.Y. Yang, 'Classical Chinese Fiction in the West: 1960-1980', *Renditions*, 13 (1980), 40-55 (pp. 52-55).

⁴ Wolfgang Iser, introduction, *The Implied Reader* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp. xi-xiv (p. xii).

⁵ Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), p. 7.

⁶ See Liu Shaoming 劉紹銘, 'Da lu wen xue zuo pin de si ben ying yi 大陸文學作品的四本英譯 [Four English translations of literature of the People's Republic of China]', *The Chinese Intellectual*, 1986 Winter, 126-28, (p. 127). The four English translations studied by Liu are Lee Yee, ed. *The New Realism: Writings from China After the Cultural Revolution* (Hippocrene, 1985), Michael S. Duke, *Contemporary Chinese Literature: An Anthology of Post-Mao Fiction and Poetry* (Sharpe, 1985), Michael S. Duke, *Blooming and Contending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era* (Indiana University Press, 1985), and Jeffrey C. Kinkley, *After Mao: Chinese Literature and Society 1979-1981* (Harvard University Press, 1985).

⁷ Tom Shippey, 'Preface: Learning to Read Science Fiction', in *Fictional Space. Essays on Contemporary Science Fiction*, ed. by Tom Shippey (Oxford & Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Basil Blackwell, 1990), pp. 1-33.

fiction.⁸ Perhaps one could argue that readers' shared knowledge is required if a meaningful reading of the text is to be obtained, be it science fiction or martial arts fiction.

Eugene Eoyang, however, sheds a different light on the contribution of the audience to reading Chinese literature, hence to the resultant translation:

The audience is contributive if not creative, constructive if not deconstructive: the better the audience, the more critical, the more demanding, the greater the possibilities for inspired translation. The audience for translation cannot be merely present and passive. The original belongs to another time and another place, but the translation is the communal property of translator and audience.⁹

Eoyang examines the complexities of different audiences which exist for Chinese literature in *The Transparent Eye: Reflections on Translation, Chinese Literature, and Comparative Poetics* (1992) by pointing out that the audiences have evolved to encompass different groups over the past few decades, and the translators must respond to three audiences: 'first, the non-Chinese English-speaking readers who do not know Chinese; second, the non-Chinese English-speaking readers who know (or who are learning) Chinese; third, the English-speaking native Chinese readers.'¹⁰ Other than grouping the readers in the same three categories as Eoyang, Chiang T'ai-fen and Ch'iu Chin-jung also point out that translation aimed at the latter two groups of readers who read Chinese calls for a different strategy as they 'may possess a considerable stock of knowledge about the Chinese tradition. A translation aimed at them will no doubt leave out a lot of materials necessary for the common reader's understanding of the

⁸ The first work in the Jinology series is Ni Kuang 倪匡, *Wo kan Jin Yong xiao shuo* 《我看金庸小說》 [Reading Jin Yong's martial arts fiction] (Taipei: Yuanjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1980).

⁹ Eugene Eoyang, "Artifices of Eternity": Audiences for Translations of Chinese Literature', in *The Transparent Eye: Reflections on Translation, Chinese Literature, and Comparative Poetics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992), pp. 63-78 (p. 77).

¹⁰ Eoyang, *The Transparent Eye*, p. 68.

translation.'¹¹ The common readers are those who do not read Chinese. Chiang and Ch'iu believe that what ultimately concerns them is the purpose and the reader towards whom a translated work is directed.¹²

In "Insuperable Barriers? Some Thoughts on the Reception of Chinese Writing in English Translation" (1990), W.J.F. Jenner expresses his disappointment with Chinese writing in English translation, observing that 'we could easily find modern Chinese works highly thought of by Chinese readers that tend to leave Anglophone readers cold'¹³ One could argue that this may well be a case of applying Western literary criteria to studying an alien literature, as he observes later, 'Anglophone readers have generally been offered not what is better than and different from their own and cognate literatures, but inferior imitations and adaptations of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western models.'¹⁴ Here, one could also argue that the "limitation" of Chinese writing in English translation could be attributed to the reader's approaching the work with Western literary assumptions, instead of approaching the translation with another set of cultural and literary assumptions.

¹¹ Chiang T'ai-fen and Ch'iu Chin-jung, 'Vincent Y.C. Shih's Translation of the *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*: A Note on Literary Translation', *Tamkang Review*, 15.1-4 (1985), 233-53 (p. 234). For their three categories of readers, see pp. 234-35.

¹² Ibid., p. 252. On the purpose and functions of translational activities, see Hans Vermeer 'Skopos and Commission in Translational Action', in *Readings in Translation Theory*, ed. by Andrew Chesterman (Helsinki: Oy Finn Lectura Ab, 1989), pp. 173-87; see also Roda P. Roberts, 'The Concept of Function of Translation and Its Application to Literary Texts', *Target*, 4.1 (1992), 1-16.

¹³ W.J.F. Jenner, 'Insuperable Barriers? Some Thoughts on the Reception of Chinese Writing in English Translation', in *Worlds Apart: Recent Chinese Writing and Its Audiences*, ed. by Howard Goldblatt (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1990), pp. 177-97 (p. 178). An earlier version appeared as 'Insuperable Barriers? Random Thoughts on Making a Place for Modern Chinese Writing in English-Speaking Cultures', in *The Commonwealth of Chinese Literature: Papers of the International Reisenburg Conference, West Germany, July 1986*, 2 vols (Reisenburg: University of Reisenburg); and yet another earlier version appeared as 'Insuperable Barriers?' *Renditions*, 25 (1986), 18-37.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 181.

Yang alerts us to the danger of applying Western theory to interpret Chinese fiction on the part of the reader:

One must bear in mind that the traditional Chinese novel and short story were not designed on the basis of modern Western literary and aesthetic concepts of fiction and that they were developed in a totally different cultural background. Undiscriminating application of purely Western theory or criteria and inappropriate comparisons can hardly help develop a better understanding of Chinese fiction.¹⁵

On the approaches to the translation of Chinese fiction, Yang points out that 'despite the recent trend towards complete translations, some translators still prefer readability through partial translations, adaptations and retelling. The best approach would seem to require fidelity to the spirit, style, and flavor of the original without sacrificing readability.'¹⁶ Readability aside, one could argue that Yang, in emphasizing fidelity to the flavour of the original, has already committed himself to a set of Chinese literary assumptions in evaluating a translation.¹⁷ One may also argue that Yang perceives Chinese fiction in English translation as a situation whereby translating the Chinese language into English may prove inadequate. Chinese cultural values embodied in the Chinese language should also be transmitted, as the values and ideology the fiction stands for could be reflected and refracted¹⁸ in the target language, a situation bearing

¹⁵ Winston L.Y. Yang, 'Classical Chinese Fiction in the West: 1960-1980', p. 51.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁷ Eoyang expounds the concept of flavour in "Beyond Visual and Aural Criteria: The Importance of Flavor in Chinese Literary Criticism", claiming that 'flavor, then, is the soul of writing; while sounds and images convey some of the thoughts, only flavour can convey its essence' (p. 100).

¹⁸ André Lefevere, 'The Study of Literary Translation: Productive and Less So', *Tamkang Review*, 15.1-4 (1985), 367-88 introduces "refraction" as 'the rather long term strategy, of which translation is only a part, and which has as its aim the manipulation of foreign work in the service of certain aims that are felt worthy of pursuit in the native culture' (p. 379). But Lefevere claims that 'I have more or less given up using "refraction," and I am now using "rewriting" instead.' In Luo Xuanmin, 'Literary Translation and Comparative Literature: An Interview with Professor Andre Lefevere', *Tamkang Review*, 27.1 (1997), 103-19 (p. 109).

some resemblance to the translational phenomena described by Moses Nintai¹⁹ and Paul F. Bandia,²⁰ and to the notion of "prototext" in describing translational strategies, as introduced by Julien Vermeulen.²¹

The issue on approaches to the translation of Chinese fiction was also taken up by Leo Ou-fan Lee. In "Contemporary Chinese Literature in Translation -- A Review Article" (1985), which is a critique of some eighteen publications in the translation series on contemporary Chinese literature brought out by the Foreign Languages Press/Panda Books in China, Lee reminds us that 'a severely abridged translation gives a partial and often erroneous impression of the original work' and that 'artistic integrity inevitably suffers from liberties that a translator may take with any longer work, such as a traditional novel'²² Lee points out that style is another factor that translators have to take into consideration. After admitting that 'I do not consider her [Gladys Yang] translation²³ a failure at all; rather it is felicitous when compared with other translations by younger native Chinese translators,' Lee, being a Chinese American scholar, yet finds something disturbing in her style:

From the American angle, the Yangs' [Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang] "limitations" may be their use of Anglicisms and occasional expressions or

¹⁹ Moses N. Nintai, 'African Literature in European Languages: Major Features and Implications for Translation', in *Translation -- The Vital Link. Proceedings of the XIII FIT World Congress Translation -- The Vital Link, 6-13 August, 1993, Brighton*, 2 vols (London: Institute of Translation and Interpreting, 1993), I, 564-72.

²⁰ Paul F. Bandia, 'Translation as Culture Transfer: Evidence from African Creative Writing', *TTR*, 6.2 (1993), 55-78.

²¹ Julien Vermeulen, 'Translating Léopold Sédar Senghor', in *Translation and the (Re)production of Culture. Selected Papers of the CERA Research Seminars in Translation Studies. 1989-1991*, ed. by Clem Robyns (Leuven: The CERA Chair for Translation, Communications and Cultures, Katholieke Universiteit, 1994), pp 107-24 (pp. 112-13).

²² Leo Ou-fan Lee, 'Contemporary Chinese Literature in Translation -- A Review Article', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 44.3 (1985), 561-67 (p. 565).

²³ Lee refers specifically to Gladys Yang's translation *A Small Town Called Hibiscus* by Gu Hua (Beijing: Panda Books, 1983).

sentences that sound slightly "archaic." On the other hand, one also finds a ring of informality that lends itself to easy readability but does not necessarily capture the cadence of the original works, especially in traditional Chinese fiction.²⁴

One could also add that the same piece of Chinese fiction may elicit different responses from Western readers. An illuminating experience is a case cited by Joseph S.M. Lau in his "Translation as Interpretation: A Pedagogical View" (1985) that a full-length and competent translation may not give readers the same kind of reading experience as the original work. The famous contemporary author Bai Xianyong 白先勇 translated or recast all fourteen stories in his own *Taipei ren* 《台北人》 [Taipei characters] (1971) into *Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream* (1982),²⁵ first helped out by Patia Yasin, a native speaker, and then polished by George Kao, a professional in both translating and editing. Lau discovered that despite such conscientious striving for perfection, the author-translator still could not elicit the same response as the original work. Burton Raffel, for one, criticized Bai's translation harshly:

Written in essentially plotless style, the stories catalog, often in great detail, the lives of the defeated Chiang Kai-shek's followers, military and civilian alike, after they took refuge in Taiwan....As literature, alas, virtually all these stories are deeply unsatisfactory, at least in this translation. George Kao (whose function as editor seems to have been devoted largely to making everything as pedantic and dull as possible) refers to Mr. Pai's [Bai's] 'brilliantly allusive language,' but almost nothing brilliant survives in the wooden, stiff prose of this book, and the allusiveness is footnoted to within an inch of its life.²⁶

Michael Duke, sinologist and translator, however, considers Bai Xianyong's own translation of *Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream* 'by far the most

²⁴ Leo Ou-fan Lee, 'Contemporary Chinese Literature in Translation -- A Review Article', pp. 565-66.

²⁵ Bai Xianyong and Patia Yasin, trans. *Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982)

²⁶ This review article appeared in the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, 14 March, 1983, quoted in Joseph S.M. Lau 'Translation as Interpretation: A Pedagogical View', *Tamkang Review*, 15.1-4 (1985), 349-65 (p. 353).

artistically created collection of modern Chinese stories from any period.²⁷ One could argue here that reader response depends on whether one has acquired the "taste" for Chinese fiction, which seems to bear out what Joseph S.M. Lau pointed out earlier that reading Chinese fiction required "acquired taste".

On the approaches to translating Chinese literature, Jenner also explains why Anglophones find it hard to respond to certain kinds of Chinese literary style, citing Liu Binyan 劉賓雁 as an example:

Translating Liu Binyan literally into English, rhetorical questions, high-flown declarations, and all, and the result reads very uncomfortably. He is a rhetoric that is no longer accepted here. This is our problem, not his. He can and does deeply stir the emotions and thoughts of his Chinese readers, and that is what really counts, and demands our respect. Yet what moves deeply in the original can ring a little hollow in English unless the translator ruthlessly tones down the grand manner.²⁸

In "The Problematic Nature of Modern and Contemporary Chinese Fiction in English Translation" (1990), Michael Duke examines what he believes to be some of the major problems concerning Chinese fiction, namely, in production, dissemination, and reception, problems that must be overcome if Chinese writers and scholars of modern fiction want to see fiction achieve international stature.²⁹ He considers the number of works by major writers since 1919 in English translation not very impressive, and of those available in translation, only very few are readable.³⁰ Duke considers selection and translation equally important, claiming that 'the first problem of translation is

²⁷ Duke, 'The Problematic Nature of Modern and Contemporary Chinese Fiction in English Translation', p. 212.

²⁸ Jenner, p. 185.

²⁹ Michael S. Duke, 'The Problematic Nature of Modern and Contemporary Chinese Fiction in English Translation', in *Worlds Apart: Recent Chinese Writing and Its Audiences*, ed. by Howard Goldblatt (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1990), pp. 198-227. An earlier version appeared in *The Commonwealth of Chinese Literature: Papers of the International Reisenburg Conference, West Germany, July 1986*. Vol. 1.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 209-10.

actually one of selection, and this involves the artistic evaluational skills of a reader-cum-editor or translator.'³¹ A quality translation, according to Duke, should capture the quintessential qualities of the author, meaning that 'to retain the artistic excellence of the original is to produce an aesthetically appealing English translation, and this requires a more serious attitude towards translation than is currently in evidence in two of the three major contemporary Chinese literature translation journals.'³² He reiterates that literary excellence is the primary reason for the favourable reception of the various fictions in translation mentioned in his essay.

Perry Link, however, considers that in literary translation faithfulness to tone can be just as important as faithfulness to denotative meaning, observing in his introduction to *Stubborn Weeds: Popular and Controversial Chinese Literature* (1983) that:

In matters of translation, the editor and translators have emphasized both naturalness in English and fidelity to the Chinese. We feel that in literary translation faithfulness to tone -- involving the attempt to write what a native speaker of the target language might write if inspired by the "same" thought [...] -- can be just as important as faithfulness to denotative meaning. Our emphasis has involved trying to match the overall quality of writing in Chinese and English: harsh when it is harsh, subtle when subtle, immature when immature.³³

Eugene Eoyang, in his review article on Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang's *The Scholars*, a traditional Chinese vernacular fiction by Wu Jingzi 吳敬梓, considers literary assumptions and generic features important dimensions in reading Chinese fiction in English translation, observing that:

³¹ Ibid., p. 213.

³² Ibid., p. 214. Duke considers both *Chinese Literature* (brought out in China) and *The Chinese PEN* (brought out in Taiwan) suffer from poor translation and serious truncation, only the Hong Kong-based *Renditions* has exercised consummate care in both selection and translation (pp. 214-15).

³³ Perry E. Link, *Stubborn Weeds: Popular and Controversial Chinese Literature After the Cultural Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), p. 26.

Western readers, particularly those accustomed to modern notions of a "well-made narrative," may have difficulty with the rambling, divagational, digressive structure of traditional vernacular works in Chinese, which shift the narrative focus, unpredictably, from character to character.³⁴

Eoyang commends the Yangs for preserving these vestiges of oral narration, including the age-old formula, "But if you want to know what happens next, you must read the next chapter." He points out that the difficulties encountered in translating vernacular fiction differ from those of other literary texts, as:

Translating vernacular Chinese fiction involves not merely linguistic and lexical problems, but generic difficulties as well. The "pleasure of the text" in the original are in the verve and vitality of the idiomatic expressions, rather than in character analysis, subtle psychologizing or impressive interior dialogues. Indeed, the key to vernacular storytelling is in the speed of the narration. The Yangs capture many of these qualities, but unfortunately, they leave out the "earthiness" of the vernacular -- which is one of the features that distinguish it from literary texts.³⁵

In "Blunder or Service?" (1991), Eva Hung examines the translation of contemporary Chinese fiction into English by studying the roles of the Chinese author, the literary agent, the publisher, the editor or copy-editor, as well as that of the translator, to see how each can contribute to the success or failure of a translation from the Chinese. Certain problematic aspects of the translation of contemporary Chinese fiction are cited.

Critics seem to hold conflicting views as to who would be in a better position to render Chinese fiction into English, those who translate into their own language or those who translate out of their language. According to Eoyang, "sinicized Westerners" and westernized Chinese constitute two major groups of translators.³⁶ Eva Hung, to whom

³⁴ Eugene Eoyang, Review, 'The Scholars' by Wu Ching-Tsu, Translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang', *Translation Review*, 43 & 44 (1993), 55-56 (p. 55).

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Eoyang, *The Transparent Eye*, p. 68 points out that translators like Arthur Waley and Ezra Pound are forerunners of "sinicized Westerners" while translators like James J.Y. Liu, D.C. Lau, Wu-chi Liu, and Irving Lo constitute the westernized Chinese.

the quality of the translation is still the most important consideration, divides Chinese-English translators into two categories: those whose native tongue is English and those whose first language is Chinese.³⁷ She claims that 'problems of misinterpretation and awkward English are common to both groups of translators, and the general standard of translation will improve only if translators become aware of their own limitations.'³⁸ Bonnie S. McDougall takes up this translator issue further in her "Chinese Errors and English Infelicities" (1996), pointing out that reader expectation may easily be overlooked in the translating process, as:

The most common traps in translating from one language to another, where the final language is native to the translator and the initial language is learnt, are to make lexical or syntactical errors in the learnt language and to overlook reader expectation in the native language.³⁹

Margaret Ng, critic and columnist, and an *aficionado* who has written some books on the study of Jin Yong's works,⁴⁰ is more inclined to believe that to the devout Jin Yong reader, his shorter works, such as *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, which are more manageable to translators, do not give the satisfaction of the full-length works which are so complex that they would represent a challenge no smaller than *The Dream of the Red Chamber* to the translators.⁴¹ Nevertheless, Chard considers this book a good choice for translation into English as 'it is one of the shortest of Jin Yong's novels, and contains a smaller proportion of martial arts than in most of his work.'⁴²

³⁷ Eva Hung, "Blunder or Service?" p. 41.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 42.

³⁹ Bonnie S. McDougall, 'Chinese Errors and English Infelicities', *Journal of Macrolinguistics*, 6-7 (1996), 11-21 (pp. 11-12).

⁴⁰ See Wu Aiyi's 吳靄儀 [Margaret Ng], *Jin Yong xiao shuo kan ren sheng* 《金庸小說看人生》 [Life as observed from Jin Yong's novels] (Hong Kong: Mingchuang chubanshe, 1991) and *Jin Yong xiao shuo de qing* 《金庸小說的情》 [Love in Jin Yong's novels] (Hong Kong: Mingchuang chubanshe, 1991).

⁴¹ Margaret Ng, Preface, *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, 1996 edition, pp. viii-xv (p. xv).

⁴² Chard, Review, 'Jin Yong: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* (Translated by Olivia Mok)', p. 606.

What distinguishes *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* from the other martial arts novels by the same writer is that some modern Western literary techniques can be found in this book, as Hua Laura Wu the critic observes:

This novel starts in *medias res* and hence puts the reader right in the middle of narrative action and tension. Then, narration of the "present moment" interweaves with analepsis or an evocation of past events. This zigzag course of narrative development holds up the reader in constant suspense and expectation. Moreover, the retrospective account of certain past events is delivered several times and told by various characters, often eyewitnesses, from different perspectives, as in the case of the duel between Phoenix and Gully. Instead of ending the story with a final victory of the hero, as *wuxia* fiction generically requires, the narrative line of the present novel stops in a quandary, leaving the reader perplexed and in doubt. Here, the linear unfolding of the story, with a well-defined beginning, middle, and end, the typical and most favored narrative strategy of traditional and modern *wuxia* writers, is discarded in favor of a narrative labyrinth with manifold exits, returns, and circuitous routes, most befitting a novel of intrigues.⁴³

Jin Yong has not only borrowed Western literary techniques for some of his works to create a coherent and exciting story, but has also helped himself liberally to other sources in both Western and Eastern literatures, as Sinclair and Fu seem to frown upon Jin Yong's manner of appropriating other's works for his own use:

As with any genre writer, Jin Yong has borrowed heavily from his forebears and other sources, though he has failed to acknowledge many of these. Many characters from Wang Dao Lo's [Wang Dulu 王度盧] *Sleeping Dragon and Hidden Tiger* [《臥虎藏龍》] have been imitated by Jin Yong, and Yang Xian [楊展] in Zhu Jing Mu's [Zhu Zhenmu 朱貞木] *Seven Kill Tablet* [《七殺碑》] was the model for Yuen Cheng-Ji [Yuan Chengzhi 袁承志] in the *Sword Stained with Royal Blood* [《碧血劍》]. Basic premises of *A Deadly Secret* [《連城訣》] were taken from Alexandre Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo* and *The Man Behind the Iron Mask*, and the works of Edgar Allan Poe; and similarly, elements of *Flying Fox on Snowy Mountain* [《雪山飛狐》] were

⁴³ Hua Laura Wu, pp.146-47.

borrowed from *Rashomon*. Passages in *The Deer and the Cauldron* [《鹿鼎記》] are also reminiscent of parts of *The Three Musketeers*.⁴⁴

It would appear that Margaret Ng perceives this "borrowing" act of Jin Yong in a rather different light. She considers Jin Yong a great transposer in incorporating Western ideas and cultures into Chinese culture, describing him as:

Prolific reader that he [Jin Yong] has always been, from the *History of Twenty-five [Chinese] Dynasties* to the complete works of Shakespeare, of Freud, of every major English and French writer, he has skillfully used elements of foreign culture -- including Greek mythology and the great Greek tragedies -- and blended them into his vast canvas of heroes and goddesses, where they miraculously take on a Chinese look.⁴⁵

Ng seems to find Jin Yong's incorporation of foreign culture into his works a demonstration of the strength of Chinese culture, stating that: 'For, in Jin Yong's readiness to take from the vast outside world and convert to its own use, is demonstrated the inner strength of Chinese culture at its most lively and fertile.'⁴⁶

Like Chinese traditional novelists, Jin Yong depicts an action with meticulous details. For instance, a simple act of spitting in someone's face, which should take no more than a split second, can be dragged out like a slow motion replay, bogged down with the minutest graphic descriptions. Jin describes such a scene in Chapter 9, how Fox, in his show of strength against Sai the Commissioner, tries to dart spittle at his enemy to win another trick:

Fox exploded in a little laugh. Suddenly he hawked up phlegm. A gob of spittle darted from his throat, straight at the face of the Commissioner.

⁴⁴ Sinclair and Fu.

⁴⁵ Margaret Ng, p. xiv. Minford also confirms that Jin Yong read Western fiction from an early age, notably Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson, Alexandre Dumas, *père* before becoming an avid reader of Agatha Christie in later years, in his introduction to Jin Yong's *The Deer and the Cauldron -- the Adventures of a Chinese Trickster: Two Chapters from a Novel*, p. 6.

⁴⁶ Margaret Ng, p. xiv.

Simultaneously displaying the move Multiple Encircling, Fox whipped out his legs in front.

The Commissioner felt a sudden chill run through him and clutch at his heart. Dodging the flying discharge demanded either leaping upward or ducking with a bowed head. But leaping upward would certainly invite a blow to his midriff by his opponent snapping up his left leg. As to ducking, it would mean proffering his jowl to the right leg of his enemy, attracting another blow. Shooting up presented just as difficult an alternative as slipping down. Sai finally resorted to parrying with the edges of his palms, guarding his vulnerable parts. The phlegm landed with a plop, nuzzling neatly between Sai's brows. This sordid matter would have been shunned by a child of seven. But under the belief that his adversary had more savage moves in store for him, the crestfallen and out-manoeuvred Sai had to accept the slaver with the heroic courage befitting a commissioner.

The snivel plastering with a smack on the Commissioner's face put all his comrades on the alert. Afraid they might be the next targets of a similar clandestine attack, none could muster enough courage to lift his finger to wipe the gluey slime from the face of the assaulted. Amidst such dreadful embarrassment exploded the decree 'Trick Two', sounding far less authoritative than the previous acclaim.

(Ch. 9, pp. 334-35)

Jin's stories, which go into great detail in giving the reader the feats of various schools of swordplay and pugilism, are written in a literary style interspersed with Confucian, Buddhist and Taoist thinking. Besides the usual fighting and revenge, ingredients essential to martial arts fiction, Jin's stories also feature light romance. Of course, the main interest lies in their endless description of spectacularly wild feats of martial art, some of which are, no doubt, the product of the author's imagination and ingenuity. In Chapter 6, Jin gives an example of such spectacularly wild feats -- how Bush the monk performs his version of the Suspension Iron Bridge differently when Valour and Curio try to push him down the mountain:

Tree was suddenly alive to the imminent danger. Nevertheless, he maintained his sense of proportion in the face of such danger and effortlessly moved into the Suspension Iron Bridge, tilting his body to the left. The Suspension Iron Bridge is the ultimate trick for foiling mortal attack, designed originally as a counter measure to parry clandestine weapons. If at the moment of a brutal onslaught, with the secret weapon already whistling from the assailant, one fails to make a timely escape by either leaping clear off the ground or dodging to the side, the last resort is to straighten and tense one's body, then suddenly thrust it

slanting backward with face towards the sky and both feet securely on the ground, thus allowing the swishing weapon to sweep past, almost glancing the face. The more advanced one becomes in this martial feat, the closer one reaches one's back to the ground. The crucial rule of this move rests with the lightning movements in thrusting and recovering one's back as well as the straightness achieved by the body, as the command for this move runs: "The feet are as strong as cast iron and the body as stiff as a ramp, suspended like a bridge." Tree also practised his version of the Suspension Iron Bridge differently from the others: instead of slanting his body backward, he thrust it to the left, anchoring his feet by the edge of the cliff and suspending his body in mid air, balancing almost half of his weight over the snow-laden mountain.

(Ch. 6, pp. 217-18)

Readers familiar with Van Gulik's Judge Dee series may already have been exposed to vivid descriptions of action scenes, similar to those found in Jin Yong's novels. Van Gulik tackled one of the fighting scenes in his translated work *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee*, a title in the *gongan* 公案 [public cases] subgenre which Ma Yau-woon considers to be a precursor of modern martial arts fiction, by retaining all the details. Van Gulik's translation of a fighting scene reads as follows:

He [Manager Loo] had hardly finished speaking when Djao Wan-chuan had rolled up his sleeves, and cursing Judge Dee and Ma Joong for a corrupt official and his running-dog, he sprang towards Ma Joong swift as an arrow, aiming a long blow at his heart region, using the stance called "a tiger clawing at a sheep". But Ma Joong dodges the blow by withdrawing one step to the left, a trick called "enticing the tiger out [of] his forest": at the same time he hit Djao's outstretched arm a sharp blow with two fingers exactly on the vein inside the elbow. Djao's right arm was temporarily lamed, his attack was stemmed, and he was trying to regain his stance when Ma Joong followed up his success with a sharp blow below Djao's ribs. Now Djao was fully aware that he had an expert opponent and went on strictly according to rules. Using his lamed arm to protect his body, he quickly caught Ma Joong's right wrist with his left arm. But before Djao could twist his arm and place a kick, Ma Joong quickly countered with the trick called: "The Phoenix bird spreading its wings"; he sprang two feet in the air, thus loosening Djao's grip, at the same time aiming a left kick at his face. Djao, however, had expected this move; he quickly ducked between Ma Joong's legs before he had come down and threw him on the floor with a crash.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Robert Hans van Gulik, trans. *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee* (New York: Dover Publications, 1976), p. 104. This translation was originally published as *Dee Goong An* by Toppan Printing Company (Tokyo, 1949).

Later, when Van Gulik turned to writing Chinese detective stories modelled on the Chinese *gongan* 公案 [public cases] he also made vivid descriptions of minutely detailed filmlike fighting scenes an essential ingredient of his Judge Dee series.⁴⁸

But what effect might this produce on the "reader" of the translation? Ke Wenli 柯文禮 is apt to point out that 'the success of a translation may be assessed by many factors, one of which is its practical effect on the reader.'⁴⁹ He believes that the translator must always bear the reader in mind while translating, remarking that:

The translator's task, however, does not end when he has found a satisfactory English equivalent for the Chinese with which he is confronted: he must visualize a hypothetical general reader and devise means of conveying the material into something within this general reader's range of experience without doing too great a violence to the original. He has to assist his reader by making his version a little more accessible.⁵⁰

Bonnie McDougall also reminds us to take genre, background knowledge, and presentation into consideration as these are some of the things related to reader expectation,⁵¹ without forgetting to warn us also that reader response to a translation can be completely independent of its accuracy.⁵² Florin, likewise, emphasizes the "reader" factor in choosing realia in translation:

⁴⁸ As examples, see Robert Hans van Gulik, *The Chinese Bell Murders* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 80-83, 128-30; and see also his *The Red Pavilion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 133-34.

⁴⁹ Ke Wenli, 'Translation and the Reader - with Special Emphasis on Translation of Chinese into English', *Foreign Languages* 3 (1990), 50-58 (p. 50).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁵¹ Bonnie S. McDougall, 'Chinese Errors and English Infelicities', *Journal of Macrolinguistics*, 6-7 (1996), 11-21 (pp. 11-12).

⁵² *Ibid.*, p.17.

Which factors characterize the "average reader" of the target text and how do they compare with analogous factors characterizing the "average reader" of the source text? Translators translate for their readers and no communication has been established if readers fail to understand the realia that have been transcribed. If translators introduce realia by other means but lose their local and historical color, communication has not been achieved either. Translators should therefore know their readers, anticipate possible losses and try to compensate for them in other ways.⁵³

The five excerpts below, in their order of appearance in the story, will serve to illustrate how informed readers with assumed knowledge may derive something quite different from reading each one, concerning a realia called a yellow knapsack, or *huang bao fu* 黃包袱 in the original text, hence will be able to delve into another side of Phoenix's character in the story. Here, the cultural presuppositions called for are not only those of traditional Chinese society, but extend to those of the martial world. The cultural item in question first presents itself in the story as Phoenix the Knight-errant enters the inn with a yellow knapsack slung across his back, with the inscription "The Invincible Under the Sky" embroidered in black silk on the bundle, as described in Excerpt A below:

Excerpt A

The moment the door was flung open, some twenty fierce fighters rushed into the room, all armed with edged weapons. They stood abreast, barring the entrance to the inn, maintaining silence. At length, one man stepped forward. He seated himself on a stool beside a table. He divested himself of the *yellow cotton knapsack* slung across his back and laid it down on the table. There was sufficient light from the candles, and I was able to make out the inscription 'The Invincible Under the Sky' embroidered in black silk on the bundle.

(Ch. 4, p. 130)

The knapsack mentioned above is no more than a piece of make-shift luggage that travellers in ancient China carried with them, a pack prepared from a big piece of cotton cloth, with paraphernalia such as clothing or other personal belongings placed over the

⁵³ Ibid., p. 127.

centre before tying each of the two opposite corners in turns to yield a nice, snug bundle to be slung easily across the back. This practice of wrapping articles with a big piece of cloth is still retained in rural China up to the present days. To a general reader, Phoenix is just carrying a bundle containing his personal belongings like any other commoners did in ancient China, except that his is a bit fanciful, with some characters embroidered on the pack, reading "The Invincible Under the Sky".

Likewise, the general reader may get the same impression, as before, concerning the yellow knapsack described in the excerpt below when Gully, whom Phoenix came expressly to seek him out on an answer concerning the disappearance of his father years ago. Excerpt B below describes what Gully tells his wife inside their room in the inn after running into his enemy Phoenix, known also as the Gilt-faced Buddha, earlier in the day in the same inn:

Excerpt B

Gully heaved a sigh, responding, "I have always been unafraid; nothing can unnerve or worry me. But it was strange how this very evening, with the baby in my arms, I suddenly broke into a cold sweat. It happened the minute the Gilt-faced Buddha barged into the inn. He laid his *bundle* on the table before casting the child a look from the corners of his eyes. You are right: I have a great fear only of the Gilt-faced Buddha."

(Ch. 4, p. 132)

Perhaps by now, the reader may be bewildered by Gully's apprehension and may not be able to figure out why Gully is intimidated. How can the Gilt-faced Buddha, sobriquet of Phoenix the Knight-errant, instill fear into Gully simply by barging into the inn?

Excerpt C below describes what Bush the monk tells the other parties about his eavesdropping on Gully some twenty-seven years before:

Excerpt C

Gully let out a laugh and answered, "It still does not necessarily mean that I would be beaten by him if we were to take up a duel now. I am afraid his *knapsack* with the emblem 'The Invincible Under the Sky' may have to change hands." Though I was on the other side of the partition, I could still hear that Gully's voice was trembling despite the cheerful act he put on.

(Ch. 4, p. 133)

In Excerpt C above, the reader may perhaps begin to see some kind of association between Gully's fear and the knapsack, or some kind of link that the knapsack may pose a threat to Gully or present itself as a written challenge to a duel.

In Excerpt D below, Bush the monk again describes to the parties present the face-to-face encounter between Gully and Phoenix some twenty-seven years before:

Excerpt D

The Gilt-faced Buddha glanced affectionately in the direction of the baby in Gully's arms. He then unstrapped the *yellow knapsack* from his back and undid the *bundle*. I craned my neck forward, expecting to see strange paraphernalia inside; but I was disappointed to see only some very ordinary-looking clothing. Phoenix parted the *yellow wrapping*, studied the inscription embroidered on the outside and muttered to himself, "The Invincible Under the Sky: all balderdash!" He reached his hands out for Gully's baby and wrapped the *cloth* round the little one. Turning to Gully, he vowed, "Brother Gully, if anything untoward should happen to you, you may rest assured that no one will dare to trample on your child." Overwhelmed with joy, Gully at once expressed his gratitude.

(Ch. 4, p. 153)

Excerpt D itself may perhaps begin to inform the reader that the yellow knapsack may connote some kind of power, as Phoenix tries to assure Gully, after wrapping the yellow cloth round his baby, that his child will not be trampled upon.

The yellow knapsack re-appears when the story closes, as described in Excerpt E below:

Excerpt E

All this time, Orchid was waiting, standing in the snowy ground. A long, long time had elapsed, and yet there was no trace of her father and her true love. Thereupon, she gently undid the parcel Fox had entrusted to her. Inside she found only a few infant clothes, a pair of baby's slippers and a *bundle wrapped in yellow cloth*. The moonlit sky saw clearly embroidered in black on the *pack* the inscriptions "The Invincible Under the Sky". This was the very *covering* which her father had wrapped around Fox all those years ago.

(Ch. 10, p. 379)

After going through the last excerpt, the reader may begin to wonder what significance this piece of cloth which made up the yellow knapsack could bring to bear on the event described in Excerpt E as the author has gone to great lengths to describe it again as the story closes.

In all these five excerpts, the meaning of the yellow knapsack in question can, in fact, all be taken literally without affecting the story line. But an informed reader sharing the same assumed knowledge of the author on the martial world will immediately read the inscription "The Invincible Under the Sky" as a sobriquet bespeaking its owner's martial prowess. The ways of the martial world prescribe that this, being an honorary title in its own right, can, under normal circumstances, only be bestowed on a champion fighter by other fighters. But fighters in the martial world sometimes do claim their own titles. "The Invincible Under the Sky" is supposedly to be a title Phoenix, known also as the Gilt-faced Buddha, claimed on his own, as confirmed in the text "'This Gilt-faced Buddha who was bold enough to call himself the Invincible Under the Sky years ago," commented Tree, "was once rather vain and arrogant [...]" (p. 49).

The seasoned reader will also call to mind the true significance of a yellow knapsack, as a common saying in the martial world goes: 黃包袱上了背, 打死了不流淚,⁵⁴ literally reads: "No tears shed if beaten to death by one carrying a yellow knapsack." What is implied is that only those martially endowed would dare carry a yellow knapsack on trips out of town. Pingjiang Buxiaosheng 平江不肖生 elaborates this saying in Chapter 7 of his *Jin dai xia yi ying xiong zhuan* 《近代俠義英雄傳》 [Chronicles of modern knights-errant and altruists]:

The *jianghu* characters (people roaming the rivers and lakes) will invariably step forward to greet the one carrying a yellow knapsack. They may choose to test out each other in fighting at will. If the yellow knapsack owner is hard on travelling expenses, the *jianghu* characters somehow have to help out. If one chooses to challenge the yellow knapsack owner to a duel, his family will have to reclaim the body should he suffer death; the yellow knapsack owner can just walk away, incurring no liabilities whatsoever. However, the one who beats the yellow knapsack owner to death has to get him a coffin and can bury him just anywhere, incurring no liabilities whatsoever. This is the meaning of "no tears shed if beaten to death".⁵⁵

Another version of the same common saying goes: 身背黃包袱, 打死不抵命,⁵⁶ meaning: "No life repaid if beaten to death by one carrying a yellow knapsack." Unlike the general reader, the informed reader with assumed knowledge will be able to infer from his reading that Phoenix, who carries the yellow knapsack, must believe himself to be so martially endowed or he is so full of himself that he dares to bare his audacity by announcing to the martial world that he is the champion fighter. It can also be inferred that Phoenix is daunting other adept fighters into challenging him in open. It could also be assumed that supremacy over other fighters or Schools in the martial world can be claimed by challenging one's opponents to a contest of martial ability and

⁵⁴ This saying appeared originally in Chapter 7 of *Jin dai xia yi ying xiong zhuan* 《近代俠義英雄傳》 [Chronicles of modern knights-errant and altruists] by Pingjiang Buxiaosheng 平江不肖生, cited in Ye Hongsheng 葉洪生, *Ye Hongsheng lun jian* 《葉洪生論劍》 [Ye Hongsheng on martial arts fiction], pp. 142-43.

⁵⁵ Quoted in *ibid.* Translation mine.

⁵⁶ Shen Ji 沈寂, Dong Changqing 董長卿, and Gan Zhenhu 甘振虎, p. 39.

defeating them in the process. As Phoenix has already announced himself to be the owner of the yellow knapsack, he proclaims the right to daunt any fighter into challenging him in combat.

The reader's shared knowledge is again called for in grasping a genre-specific manner of attacking one's enemy known as *xianxue* 點穴, or "pique" as rendered throughout the translation. The first encounter of this mode of attack is found in Chapter 1 when the monk, known as Tree, tries to force Hawk into accepting his invitation to go up to the snowy mountain. The monk resorts to a vile trick. The passage reads:

不待劉元鶴答話，左手兜了個圈子，忽然翻了過來，抓住他的右腕。

劉元鶴陡感半身酸麻，知道自己糊裏糊塗的已被他扣住脈門...

Before Hawk could find words, the monk, describing a circle with his left hand, twisted it round suddenly and grabbed Hawk's right wrist.

Half of Hawk's side was numbed and aching. The next thing, which happend before Hawk could collect himself, was that the monk had already pinched his wrist, at the Pulse Gate, the point where blood vessels were located and the pulses felt. (Ch. 1, p. 36)

The translation can be considered a faithful, but expended, rendition of the Chinese original. The passage does mean what it says. Yet the informed readers would know immediately that Hawk is "piqued" in the process, a genre-specific cultural practice found in martial arts fiction, which is the act of applying pressure, such as jabbing with a finger or attacking with a weapon possessing a sharp point or edge, at certain paralytic points on the body to effect an imbalance of pneuma (or *qi* 氣) which circulates through the meridians, inflicting in the victim any of the four sensations, namely, sore or ache (酸), limp (軟), numb (麻), and paralysed (痺), even to the point of being immobilized (癱). If the afflicted is not revived soon enough he may suffer permanent injuries or death. There are supposed to be three hundred and sixty paralytic points, each claiming a label, in the human body, with thirty-six being major ones.

Getting this "piquing" action across linguistic boundaries is one thing, as there exists no matching universe-of-discourse features for concepts on human anatomy and internal circulation of gaseous fluids as conceived by traditional Chinese medicine in the target language; but expecting a target audience, holding divergent-cultural, devoid also of genre-specific assumptions, to infer the logical consequences of, or to salvage any implied information from such an attack is another. Would the reader know that when "half of Hawk's side was numbed and aching" Hawk was experiencing sensations typical of one suffering pique? Here, the implied act to be salvaged mentally by the reader is that the monk had already jabbed a finger at a paralytic point on Hawk's wrist on the sly, thus piquing him in the process. Also, would the target reader know what the literal translation "Pulse Gate" signifies if the explanatory phrase "the point where blood vessels were located and the pulses felt" was not inserted after the term?

Contrast the example cited above, in which the act of piquing is not expressly described, one that has to be inferred by the sensations suffered, other acts of piquing are openly portrayed, as in:

一縱身，已欺到右僮身邊，左指點他肩頭「巨骨穴」，右手以大擒拿手勁來奪劍。

In one leap, he found himself alongside to the younger twin, almost touching him. Valour hit the lad on the shoulder with his left finger, piquing the paralytic point Large Bone and snatched the sword straight with his right hand, practising the pugilistic skills of the Grappling Hand. (Ch. 2, p. 62)

Although the act of jabbing a finger at the paralytic point Large Bone on the shoulder is clearly spelt out, the unpleasant sensations suffered, be them mild or severe, are left to the imagination of the reader. At least one thing implied here is that the lad would suffer a disadvantage after being piqued, making him more vulnerable. Both examples on jabbing with a finger bespeak the distinctive martial prowess of individual fighters. Sometimes, piquing can be effected by other means and conducted from a respectable

distance. A scene in Chapter 4 describes what befalls Gully's enemies when Gully is heard arriving at the inn in a stage coach,

只聽得車帘內一人說道：「叫化兒來討賞是不是？好，每個人施捨一文！」眼見黃光連閃，眾人啊喲、啊喲的幾聲叫，先後摔倒。范田兩位武功高，沒摔倒，但手腕上還是各中了一枚金錢鏢，一杖一劍，撒手落在地下。田相公叫道：「范大哥，扯呼！」

Presently an answer came from behind the blind of the coach, "Paupers awaiting their alms, eh? Fine: some money, then, for whoever is present." In no time, their eyes were dazzled by the glittering and glistening of gold and all dropped to the ground in a second, letting out cries. Fan and Tian, being proficient in martial arts, were the only two who survived the ordeal. They managed to maintain themselves in an upright position, even though each had caught one of the dispatched arhat quoits in the wrist, forcing them to slacken their grip on their weapons, so that they dropped to the ground. Tian reacted quickly, "Big Brother Fan, move to the side quickly!" (Ch. 4, pp. 124-125)

Readers claiming shared knowledge have no difficulty identifying those who dropped to the ground as less martially endowed, hence they fall prey to Gully who piques them with arhat quoits dispatched from a distance. Their presumption that Gully has piqued his enemies is soon confirmed when he immediately restores those afflicted back to normal with coppers dispatched, again, from a distance,

范幫主身手好生了得，彎腰拾起鐵杖，如風般搶到倒在地下的幾名漢子身旁，要給他們解開穴道，我學跌打之時，師父教過人身的三十六道大穴，所以范幫主伸手解穴，我也懂得一點兒。那知他推拿按捏，忙個不了，倒在地下的人竟是絲毫不動。車中那人笑道：「很好，一文錢不夠，每人再賞一文。」又是十幾枚銅錢一枚跟著一枚撒出來，每人穴道上中了一下，登時四肢活動，紛紛站起身來。

Fan the Ringleader proved himself exceptionally alert and agile. He bent down to retrieve his iron shaft and whipped around in a trice, planting himself upright beside those lying on the ground, intending to revivify their piqued points. When I received my training in osteopathic arts, my Master gave me a few lessons on the thirty-six major paralytic points of the body. When Fan the Ringleader set to revivifying the piqued points of his people, I knew a little about what he was doing. Though he applied himself with vigour to massaging and applying pressure onto the vital parts of the bodies of those attacked, he

failed to get the expected response. Those piqued remained lying on the ground, completely paralysed.

Presently the man inside the carriage broke out into loud laughter, "Very well. One lot of cash is not good enough for the job? Here comes more." All at once, ten or more coppers sprang out in quick succession, flying in every direction, each aiming at a paralytic point. There and then the victims previously inflicted by the coins thrown at them now recovered their senses in their limbs, all raising themselves to their full height. (Ch. 4, p. 125)

This scene seems to suggest that the damage done to the inflicted can perhaps be alleviated by massaging the vital paralytic points, hopefully to restore the circulation of the pneuma back to normal. Judging from how Fan and Tian have survived the ordeal, yet failed to restore the wounded on the spot, informed readers would conclude that Gully inside the coach must be a paragon fighter as his long-range piquing turns out to be so stunning that fighters less endowed, like Fan and Tian, can never succeed in undoing its harm, try as they might. Unless the pique is intended to be fatal, the victim can normally recover, even without help, after a certain lapse of time, like what is expected to happen to Orchid,

她衣衫都給我除下了，縱然時辰一過，穴道解了，也叫她走動不得。

I have taken off all her clothes. Even if she manages to recover when the time is up, she still will not be able to move about.

But if the pique proves too stunning, then it will take the victim quite some time to recover, even with outside help. That is precisely what happened to Wish and Profundity after attracting a stunning pique from Fox,

他一言出口，雙手加勁，杜玄二人哼也沒哼一聲，都已暈了過去。這一下子重手拿穴，力透經脈，縱有高手解救，也非十天半月之內所能治愈。

Heralding his own triumph, Fox doubled the power in his blows. Wish and Profundity passed out without even the time to let out a sound. Fox's pique proved stunning. The recovery of the two injured would take at least two weeks, even in the hands of adepts. (Ch. 9, p. 336)

Readers may also expect to find those less martially endowed, like Orchid and Lute, suffer greater injuries, even from minor piquing at the hands of a martial fiddler like Tree the monk,

寶樹笑吟吟的走上兩步，大袖微揚，已將苗若蘭頸口「天突」與背心「神道」兩穴上各點了一指。苗若蘭全身酸軟，癱在椅上，心裡又羞又急，卻說不出話。琴兒只道他傷了小姐，橫了心又抓住了和尚的手，要狠狠咬他一口。寶樹讓她抓住自己右手拉到口邊，手指抖動，點了她鼻邊「迎香」、口旁「地倉」兩穴。琴兒身子一震，摔倒在地。

Tree advanced two paces, wreathed in smiles. No sooner had he waved his sleeve than he had piqued two of Orchid's paralytic points, the Heavenly Butte at her nape and the Celestial Tract on her back. Orchid was afflicted immediately: her body ached, and she was paralysed, lying back full length in the chair. Abashed and indignant, Orchid could not utter a sound. Seeing that the monk had wrought harm to her mistress, Lute again braced herself and reached for his arm, meaning to bite deep into his flesh. Tree allowed her to pull his right hand until it was almost touching her lips. Then he turned his fingers and piqued two of Lute's paralytic points also: the Fragrant Sac near her nose and the Terrestrial Crypt at the corner of her mouth. Lute trembled and fell to the ground. (Ch. 8, p. 286)

Readers' assumed knowledge on piquing tells them that even adept fighters like Gully and Phoenix, although dexterious hands in dispensing piquing themselves, once their major paralytic points are piqued, they, too, can be rendered powerless. Gully has the misfortune to attract a pique from Phoenix wielding his sword on their fifth day of duelling,

但見長劍一彈，劍柄蹦將出來，正好點在胡一刀胸口的「神藏穴」上。

這「神藏穴」是人身大穴，一被劍尖點中，胡一刀登時軟倒。

In a trice, the sword retracted with a spurt, darting the tang off the blade and placing itself right on Gully's Chest, on the paralytic point Celestial Abode.

The Celestial Abode is a governing vital point of the human body system. On being piqued, Gully instantaneously dropped limp to the ground, like a rag. (Ch. 4, pp. 164-165)

Phoenix's predicament is no better than Gully's when he is attacked by Fan the Ringleader stealing behind his back,

突覺耳後「風池穴」與背心「神道穴」上一麻，情知不妙，左臂急忙揮出擊去。那知這兩大要穴被范幫主用龍爪擒拿手拿住，登時全身酸麻，任他有天大武功、百般神通，卻是半點施展不出。

Suddenly terrible sensations crept over the paralytic points of the Gusty Mere behind his ear and of the Celestial Tract behind his back. Matters had suddenly gone wrong. Alerted, Phoenix swiftly thrust out his left arm, striking a blow. Alas, it was too late. His two principal paralytic points having been piqued by Fan the Ringleader practising the Grappling Claws of the Dragon, Phoenix immediately felt sore and numbed all over. Even were he a divine incarnation, or a necromancer incarnate, Phoenix would have found himself completely unable to expedite any moves. (Ch. 9, p. 327)

Seasoned readers expect, too, to find adept martial artists not only dexterous hands at piquing, but also in surviving this mode of attack. Witness how Phoenix manages to extricate himself from another pique in the end,

苗人鳳身上的穴道是賽總管所點，那兩名侍衛不會解穴。胡斐正待伸手解救，那知苗人鳳暗中運氣，正在自行通解，手腳上鐐銬一鬆，他深深吸一口氣，小腹一收，竟自將穴道解了，左足起處，已將靈清居士踢了出去，同時一拳遞出，砰的一聲，將另一人打得直攢而出。

Commissioner Sai was the one who had piqued Phoenix on his paralytic points. The two guardsmen were at a loss as to how to revivify him. Just as Fox was reaching out his hand to invigorate him, Phoenix channelled energy appropriately within his internal system, thus taking the lead in resuscitating his own body. His limbs having been set free, Phoenix drew in a deep breath. By tucking in his midriff slightly, he had his paralytic points reinstated in a moment. Suddenly, without warning, his left foot swept up from the floor towards Spirituality the Buddhist Devotee and sent him soaring like a rocket. Thrusting out his fist at the same instant, he threw a straight punch at an opponent, propelling him forward. (Ch. 9, p. 337)

After going through numerous incidents involving the martial feat of piquing from earlier chapters, the readers, initially uniformed they may be, by now should not have

much trouble in labelling the following scene in the last chapter as an act of piquing. This incident took place some twenty years later. Fox turns out to be just as proficient as Gully, his father, in jabbing with snowballs dispatched from a distance,

彎腰在地上抓起一把雪，手指用勁，這把雪立時團得堅如鐵石。他手臂一揮，雪團直飛過去，擊中前面一人後腰。那人一跤俯跌，再也站不起來。後面一人吃了一驚，回過頭來，一個雪團飛到，正中胸口，立時仰天倒下。兩人跌法不同，卻是同樣的再不站起。

At length, he bent down and scooped up some ice flakes. Using the strength in his fingers, he kneaded the granular snow into hard spheres. Then his arm twirled and sent the snowball flying headlong, catching the more distant escapee on the back at the waist. The victim immediately fell sprawling and lay upon his face, unable to pick himself up again. Fear gripped the heart of the less distant fugitive. He turned about. Another snowball came whirling at him, catching him on the chest and sending him sprawling upon his back. Though the two wretched preys differed in the way they had dropped to the ground, they resembled each other in having lost the ability to scramble to their feet again. (Ch. 10, p. 359)

Fox proves no less proficient, again like his father, in restoring senses to his enemies a short while later, also from a respectable distance,

雙手一振，扣在掌上的雪團雙雙飛出，又中躺伏在地的兩名豪客身上，不過上次是打穴，這次卻是解穴。那兩人蠕動了幾下，撐持起來，發足狂奔而去。

Fox twirled his arms and both snowballs which he was gripping in his hands went shooting ahead, catching again the two boorish fighters lying on the ground. Unlike the previous attack in which the victims were piqued by the ice weapons, Fox intended the second attack only to revivify their afflicted points. The two victims writhed a little, struggled to their feet and fled, making good speed. (Ch. 10, p. 361)

Like realia, such as the yellow knapsack, and genre-specific practices, such as the act of piquing, personal names may not only pose a problem to translators, but also to readers when tackling Chinese fiction in general and martial arts fiction in particular. Michael Duke points out in the translator's note to the contemporary work *Raise the Red Lantern*

(1993) that he has 'translated the women's names, while only transliterating the men's names. The women's names are often thematically important, but the men's names are usually not.'⁵⁷ In *The Story of the Stone*, David Hawkes transliterates the names of those who belong to the Jia family while translating those who do not. Such guidelines may not prove too helpful in tackling a martial arts novel as the story is populated by a totally different type of character living in a counterculture parallel world of the Martial Brotherhood. Most fighters in the martial world claim a sobriquet which may disturb the general reader upon first reading of the story. One would tend to agree with Adrian Hsia that the difficulty of translating martial arts fiction begins with the names and sobriquets which often signify the character of the protagonists. He observes that in *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, all these names are usually repeated in full every time they are used, as:

Curio (is such a literal translation necessary?), a character, thought: "Uncle Fortune is Grand Master of the Southern Branch, known as the Might of the Southern Sky..." Thoughts and dialogues of this nature try the patience of the reader. He may also wish to know why lovers call each other brother and sister.⁵⁸

One could perhaps recapitulate here what Richard Vivian thought of the translation of names in Robert Chard's *Blades from the Willows*, as discussed in Chapter 4. To the reviewer, Chard's translations of proper names seem "needlessly tortuous" as some of the names, such as Emerald Distentor and Linked Culmen for magical animals and Mountains of Verdant Spots for a location, fail either to convey the meaning or rhythm of the original Chinese.⁵⁹ Vivian goes on to point out the difficulty of handling Chinese personal names, as:

⁵⁷ Michael Duke, Translator's note, *Raise the Red Lantern* by Su Tong (New York: William Morrow, 1993) pp. i-ii (p. ii).

⁵⁸ Adrian Hsia, Review, '*Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*. Yong Jin. Translated by Olivia Mok', p. 36.

⁵⁹ Vivian, p. 31.

The difficulty with trisyllabic Chinese personal names, of course, lies in deciding whether to translate the given names, as with Zhu Man-Tiger, or to represent its sound while maintaining the rhythm, as with Bai Guiyi. Cumbersome appellations such as Ruan the Pellucid or Vortex-of-Tranquillity, though, achieve neither. And how can the reader be expected to take seriously a Taoist abbot with a name like Wang Pure-Wind?⁶⁰

Michelle Man-fong Chan and Dora Shuk-ching Lok each devotes a section of their commentaries in their M.A. dissertations to discussing personal names and honorifics in translating Jin Yong's martial arts fiction.⁶¹ As readers like Adrian Hsia, they, too, found certain handling of titles or appellations in *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* problematic. Indeed, readers, especially the uninitiated, may find personal names, titles, or rather appellations, in martial arts fiction rather disturbing. Certain conventions for deriving appellations seem to be at work in martial arts fiction. It would be helpful to establish these conventions against the Chinese traditional practice of acquiring different names and kinship designations at different stages in one's life time, such as clan or family name (氏), particularly for females; childhood name (小名, 孺名, 奶名); style or courtesy name (字) used by a person's friends, usually given by his family; fancy name (號), usually given by friends; studio name or poetic name (別號) chosen by the person himself; pseudonym of writers or nom-de-plume (筆名), epithet name (綽號) based on one's physical attributes or nickname (渾名) not used in one's presence; reign name (外號) of emperors; posthumous name (諡) of emperors or high officials; and taboo name or personal name (諱) of respected persons, such as emperor or father.⁶² These names, titles, or appellations can be used interchangeably, either each on its own or in some acceptable combinations.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ See Michelle Man-fong Chan's discussion on 'names and titles', pp. 29-35 and Dora Shuk-ching Lok's discussion on 'human relationship', pp. 16-18 and also her discussion on 'names and sobriquets', pp. 25-30.

⁶² See also Zhu Bin and Celia Millward, 'Personal Names in Chinese', *Names*, 35.1 (1987), 8-21.

It is not uncommon for titles or appellations to come in long strings in martial arts fiction, as illustrated by how four characters in the story are introduced in Chapter 1:

這人是遼東天龍門北宗新接任的掌門人“騰龍劍”曹雲奇。[...]白臉漢子是他師弟“回龍劍”周雲陽。高瘦老者是他們師叔“七星手”阮士中，在天龍北宗算得是第一高手。那富商模樣的老者則是天龍門南宗的掌門人“威震天南”殷吉。

This was Curio Cao. He had recently become Grand Master of the Northern Branch of the Dragon Lodge in Liaodong Peninsula. He was also known as Leaping Dragon Sword [...]. The fellow with the pale complexion was his Junior Brother, Radiant Zhou, known as Winding Dragon Sword. The taller of the two old men was their Senior, Valour Ruan, also known as Seven Stars Hand; he was considered champion of the Northern Branch of the Dragon Lodge. The old man with the bearing of a wealthy merchant was the Grand Master of the Southern Branch of the Dragon Lodge, Fortune Yin, known as the Might of the Southern Sky.

(Ch. 1, pp. 4-5)

Take the first character as an example, "Curio Cao" is his personal name, "Grand Master of the Northern Branch of the Dragon Lodge in Liaodong Peninsula" his professional title in the martial world, acquired from his rank and office, while "Leaping Dragon Sword" is his sobriquet, conferred on him by other members in the martial world in recognition of his martial prowess. Woman fighters, so long as they have proved themselves capable, are also given sobriquets, with Sign Tian serving as a good example:

The lady went by the name of Sign Tian. Though she was young, she had already made a name in the Martial Brotherhood of the border region. As her beauty was matched by sharp intelligence and quick wit, the elder members of the Liaodong Martial Brotherhood had given her the title of Glistening Sable. The sable can make great speed on snowy ground, and is sharp and intelligent; "Glistening" described her beauty. (Ch. 1, p. 10)

Sign is not the only woman fighter who carries a sobriquet, as 'another assailant was a female, in her early thirties. She was known to Chieftain Ma as Third Zheng, alais Brandisher of the Twin Knives' (Ch. 1, pp. 18-19). It follows that characters roving in

the martial world normally carry a sobriquet. Thus, the appellation of each fighter is compounded by the following the formula:

$$\text{Personal Name} + \text{Sobriquet} \pm \text{Professional Title}$$

Professional titles fall into two broad categories, unique or ordinary. A unique professional title means only one person can lay claim to the title. For example, Curio carries a unique professional title "Grand Master of the Northern Branch of the Dragon Lodge of Liaodong Peninsula" while Sai is the Commissioner of the Imperial Guardsmen. Ordinary titles can be claimed by more than one person, for example, Jiang the Pugilist, Prime the Chief Escort, and Hawk the Imperial Guardsman.

In the story, Phoenix has claimed an additional sobriquet on his own, calling himself "The Invincible Under the Sky". On another occasion, he styled himself differently, as appeared in the signature column of a couplet hanged over the wall in the main hall of the Jadeite Eyrie on the mountaintop: 'Scribbled in extreme intoxication by Phoenix Miao, the Abandoned and Incurable, now deeply regretting the wild talk of the bygone years' (Ch. 2, p. 48). Thus, the title formula can now be expanded to read:

$$\text{Personal Name} + \text{Sobriquet} \pm \text{Professional Title} \pm \text{Self-styled Sobriquet(s)}$$

According to this formula, Phoenix can be denoted as:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Phoenix Miao} + \text{The Gilt-faced Buddha} + (\text{nil}) + \text{The Knight-errant} \\ & \quad \quad \quad + \text{The Invincible Under the Sky} \\ & \quad \quad \quad + \text{The Abandoned and Incurable} \end{aligned}$$

Following Chinese traditional practice, both the personal name and the sobriquet in the appellation can be used either on its own or in combinations as shown underlined in the examples below:

- (1) 苗人鳳踏上半步...

Phoenix strode forward half a pace. (Ch. 10, p. 375)

- (2) 你家主人跟金面佛交情可深得很哪。

So your Master and the Gilt-faced Buddha must be on very intimate terms then?
(Ch. 2, p. 48)

- (3) 我家主人言道，這是苗大俠自謙。

The lord of this eyrie said that Phoenix the Knight-errant was being modest. (Ch. 2, p. 49)

- (4) 那金面佛苗人鳳更是遠而避之的爲妙...

As for Phoenix, the Gilt-faced Buddha, Tree had no intention of running into him.
(Ch. 2, p.51)

- (5) ...到後來才知是金面佛苗人鳳苗大俠。

I found out that he was the Gilt-faced Buddha, Phoenix Miao, and the Knight-errant only much later on. (Ch. 4, p. 130)

One could argue that repetitions in the appellation, which may seem a mouthful at times, do help to project the personal attributes of the protagonists in the story. As such, they are deemed indispensable, even across linguistic boundaries. Appellations also betray the status enjoyed by individual characters in the story. As a rule, the more pompous the appellation, the greater the status enjoyed by the character, both in the story and in the Martial Brotherhood. Servants, relegated to a lower social stratum in traditional China, either carry only a given name or a family name in the story, such as Quad, servant of Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain, or as indicated in the example below,

那丫鬟道：「我叫琴兒。她是周奶媽，小姐吃她奶長大的。這位是韓嬌子，小姐就愛吃她燒的菜。你快放吊籃去接小姐上來。」于管家待要詢問是誰家的小姐，琴兒卻咕咕略略的說個不停...

"I'm Lute," the maid introduced herself. "And this is Mama Zhou. She was our lady's wet nurse. This woman over here is Auntie Hǎn. Our lady thinks highly of her culinary arts. Let down the basket quickly to bring the lady up." Steward Yu was about to ask to which family her lady belonged, but Lute just went on chattering as she busily unloaded the basket. (Ch. 3, p. 73)

Adrian Hsia would probably frown more on the translation of Chinese titles for three fighters mentioned in a dialogue:

主人臨去時吩咐小人，說青藏玄冥子道長、昆崙山靈清居士、河南太極門蔣老拳師這幾位，日內都要上山...

"Before the Master departed," answered the man, "he gave this servant instructions to expect Profundity the Taoist Phongie of the Kokonor-Tibetan School, Spirituality the Buddhist Devotee of the Altyn Tagh in Chinese Turkestan, and Jiang the Senior Mentor in Pugilism of the Absolute Lodge south of the Canamoran, to arrive on the mountain within a few days [...]."

(Ch. 2, p. 50)

These three appellations would appear to be compounded of the following formula in Chinese:

Sect / School + (Name + Professional Title)

青藏	玄冥子	道長	Profundity the Taoist Phongie of the Kokonor-Tibetan School
昆崙山	靈清	居士	Spirituality the Buddhist Devotee of the Altyn Tagh in Chinese Turkestan
河南太極門	蔣	老拳師	Jiang the Senior Mentor in Pugilism of the Absolute Lodge south of the Canamoran

Unlike unique professional titles which can be used on their own to designate their owners, ordinary professional titles in the formula above are often used in conjunction

with the names of the title bearers. Although the English translation has followed the same formula so as to preserve individual semantic components in each appellation, the few syllables that made up each title in Chinese has expanded to include such a mouthful, thus losing the brisk rhythm inherent in the original. One could argue that this may render the dialogue in question stilted or wooden in the translation. Readers' disappointment could perhaps be attributed to the limitations of the linguistic system of the English language.

The few examples taken from *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, such as the yellow knapsack (黃包袱), whose connotations come across only to seasoned readers of martial arts fiction sharing the same assumed knowledge as the author; the martial-arts-fiction-specific form of attacking one's paralytic points; and the appellations of martial fighters comprising personal names and sobriquets posing such a problem to both readers and translators have helped to demonstrate that one of the possible reasons why martial arts fiction may fail to function in the target culture could be attributed to differences in cultural presuppositions brought to bear on the reading process by the target readers, which in turn, could be traced to divergent cultural differences between the source and target cultures.

Like science fiction in the West, novice readers have to be initiated into acquiring a taste for martial arts fiction by acquainting themselves with the traditional setting of the story and specialized vocabulary and peculiar usage found in such novels. Also, not to be dismissed from a meaningful reading of martial arts fiction as a literary genre is assumed knowledge or shared knowledge in the reading process. Readers are expected to contribute their implicit cultural knowledge, if not their intellect to bridging the missing links in the story, thereby wringing a coherent whole, or Gestalt, out of the story. Cultural affinity or rapport between readers and author is taken for granted when it comes to unravelling some of the seemingly cryptic and telegraphic descriptions in martial arts fiction. Generic expectations are likely to be somewhat different in

different cultures and that translated texts may be interpreted differently should come as no surprise as the 'cultural script' differs in each culture.

In fact, whoever attempts to translate Chinese martial arts fiction into English may find it difficult to reproduce successfully the authentic appeal of the original. It would mean surmounting obstacles in transferring to a culturally and linguistically divergent literary system the multifarious facets of Chinese culture in martial arts fiction. Some of the difficulties, inherent in the translating process as well as in the reading process, and stretching beyond linguistic and cultural boundaries, may remain insurmountable in the end.

Conclusion

Polysystem Theory Tested

Investigation into the translational migrations of martial arts fiction perceived as a low or non-canonized form in an unrelated literature demonstrates the validity of the premise of polysystem theory that the "normal" position assumed by translated literature tends to be the peripheral one. However, different patterns of behaviour can be observed, depending on the hegemonic relations between source and target cultures. The long-standing traditionally dominant position of Anglo-American literature within a macro-polysystem made up of world literatures has led to English translated martial arts fiction being relegated to an extremely peripheral position.

Unlike the situation in the West, martial arts fiction is able to make inroads into Asian countries, particularly into sinicized countries with large overseas communities, either in the original Chinese language or in translated languages. Translation of prototypes of martial arts fiction into Mongolian, Vietnamese, Thai, Malay, Cambodian, Indonesian, Makassarese, and Korean goes back at least to the seventeenth century, while the translation of martial arts fiction proper has been active since the 1920s. These countries in Asia, already claiming a history of translating popular Chinese traditional novels, historical novels, and *gongan* [public cases] for several centuries, differ from the West where, as Even-Zohar writes, 'items lacking in a target literature may remain untransferable if the state of the polysystem does not allow innovations.'¹

It is also important to remember that Chinese literature, at least up to the beginning of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), occupied a leading position in the interliterary

¹ Itamar Even-Zohar, 'The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem', *Poetics Today*, 11.1 (1990), 45-51 (p. 51).

community of the Far East.² Only after China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-1895 did Japan, Korea, Mongolia, and Vietnam begin to withdraw gradually from this community. The translational phenomenon of martial arts fiction in Asia can be explained if the concept of a "commonwealth of Chinese literatures" is adopted. Marián Gálík believes that this commonwealth can be called, quite adequately, 'a "community," intraliterary or national-literary, or interliterary *sui generis*, for it is created by Chinese men and women of letters on the China mainland, in Taiwan, in Hong Kong, and in foreign countries [...].'³

Like polysystem theory, György Radó's typology also sheds light on the translational migrations of martial arts fiction. Radó classifies English, along with French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian as languages of unlimited diffusion (LUDs) or world languages; while Chinese, along with Arabic, Japanese, Korean, Swahili, Hungarian, Czech, Tai, etc. as languages of limited diffusion (LLDs). He postulates that the diffusion of world languages is 'extensive, centrifugal, and universal' while the diffusion of Chinese and such languages is 'intensive, centripetal, and limited'.⁴

One can also gain new insight into polysystem theory drawing on the nature and implications of the process of cultural transfer from an LLD, such as Chinese, into an LUD such as English, in the context of translation of theory. In Yo-In Song's terms, the translational migrations of martial arts fiction to the West can be considered an instance of transfer from an LLD into an LUD or "world language", meaning that:

² Marián Gálík, 'Interliterary and Intraliterary Aspects of the Study of Post-1918 Chinese Literature', in *Worlds Apart: Recent Chinese Writing and Its Audiences*, ed. Howard Goldblatt (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1990), pp. 231-45 (p. 231).

³ Ibid., p. 231.

⁴ György Radó, 'A Typology of LLD Problems', *Babel*, 33.1 (1987), 6-13 (p. 6).

When it comes to cultural diffusion, Chinese culture is decidedly inferior to English simply because not enough of its impact is felt overseas to overtake English. This is true despite the fact Chinese culture is a more ancient one with a vastly more enriching storehouse of knowledge than English culture. This proves that mere number of speakers or greater historical tradition does not ensure a corresponding degree of diffusion throughout the world.⁵

However, a different pattern of behaviour can be observed pertaining to the translational phenomenon found in the East. This cultural transfer in the form of avid translational activities in neighbouring countries in Asia is analysed by Song:

Historically, Chinese culture has had an impact in Asia as influential as the Greco-Roman culture has had in Western Europe. But, here again, when viewed on a global scale, Chinese culture is regarded as comparatively simple. The key word is "the global scale." Measured on the Asian, especially the Far Eastern Scale, Chinese is an LUD [language of unlimited diffusion] and the culture is a complex one.⁶

Marián Gálik reiterates this point:

Modern Chinese literature up to 1945 or 1949 respectively can be compared to a certain degree with its intraliterary character (although *cum grano salis*) to Greek literature of the Hellenistic era (3d-2d centuries B.C.) and literature of the times of the conquering wars of Alexander the Great in Egypt, Asia Minor, and Middle Asia. The intraliterary character of modern Chinese literature is enhanced by the strong national (racial?) allegiance irrespective of the *Staatsangehörigkeit*.⁷

Even-Zohar's hypothesis recognizes both the "primary", i.e. creating new items and models, and "secondary", i.e. reinforcing existing items and models, function of translation within the polysystem. The data of this study show that a translated literature cannot only assume a "primary" function within one polysystem, but also a "secondary"

⁵ Yo-In Song, 'Remarks on Cultural Transfer from LLD', *TTR*, 4.1 (1991), 63-79 (p. 66).

⁶ Song, p. 67.

⁷ Gálik, pp. 242-43, note 3.

within another, demonstrating the validity of Even-Zohar's claim that the hierarchical level reached by a text within a given culture bears a correlation to the nature of the polysystem of the receiving culture and its social/literary historical circumstances.

Even-Zohar considers the role translations play in the polysystem along two lines, noting that in cultures that are "weak", translations tend to play a strong or primary role and are located in the literary centre; and in cultures that are "strong", translations tend to play a secondary role and tend to be marginalized by the literary centres. Even-Zohar's thinking accommodates not only the primary role martial arts fiction as translated literature plays in the "weak" cultures in the East, but also the secondary role in the "strong" culture in the West. Following Bassnett, I find evaluative terms, such as "weak" and "strong" presenting all kinds of problems. Are these criteria literary or political? The data on Asian countries suggest that they follow a law of literary interference in the polysystem which states that 'a literature may be selected as a source literature because it is considered a model to emulate,'⁸ bearing out Even-Zohar's claim that 'political and/or economic power may play a role in establishing such prestige, but not necessarily. What counts most is the cultural power of the source system.'⁹

Generic Issues for Further Exploration

What seems to emerge from probing into the question as to why so little of martial arts fiction proper has been translated into Western languages, compared to the amount that has been translated copiously into other Asian languages since the 1920s, is that this translational phenomenon could possibly be traced to the untransplantability of the traditional "Chineseness" rooted in *wuxia xiaoshuo*, which, despite successful linguistic

⁸ Itamar Even-Zohar, 'Laws of Literary Interference', *Poetics Today*, 11.1 (1990), 53-72 (p. 66).

⁹ Ibid. See pp. 66-68 on the cultural power China achieved over neighbouring vassal states is comparable to that achieved by France in Europe.

translation of the text itself, may still resist transposition across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

The first encounter with Chineseness as an element defying transposition can, in fact, be found inherent in the very literary genre to which martial arts fiction belongs. *Xiaoshuo*, compatible with the English term "fiction", is a Chinese literary genre that has been little studied until the beginning of this century. This literary form had long been held in low regard. Despite its wide appeal to Chinese readers, Chinese fiction, particularly traditional fiction to which martial arts novels belong, does not seem to find acceptance in the West. Since Chinese literature is a wholly unrelated tradition, and given also the complexity of the novel tradition in China, *xiaoshuo*, therefore, should be explained on its own terms and within its own traditions if a full appreciation of the genre is to be gained. It would be wrong to try to arrive at a value judgment of Chinese fiction using the fiction of the West as a standard. Also, it would be wrong to try to take in Chinese fiction in its totality applying only the literary criteria as applied to fiction in the West. It can be argued that reading Chinese fiction with a Western frame of mind could yield something quite different as different expectations are brought to bear on the text. Perhaps, one could also be reminded that the notion of fiction, taken to mean *xiaoshuo* in China, may not be the same as in the West. It follows that applying the ontological meaning of the term "novel" as interpreted in the West to Chinese novels -- *xiaoshuo* -- would result in a sense of disappointment among Western readers. A cosmological gulf may serve to divide China and the West.

Also, try as she might to surmount linguistic or cultural barriers in the text, the translator could never hope to bridge the cosmological gulf between a Western mind and a Chinese mind, for the fundamental issues at stake boil down essentially to a different mind set of the Western reader, hence different expectations, in appraising an "unrelated literature". What seems also to emerge is that literary assumptions towards a new foreign literature may determine, among other factors, whether a genre newly

translated could elicit the same kind of appeal as among original readers. It would seem that the greater the cosmological gulf, the more divergent the literary assumptions and expectations of two cultures, hence the greater the disappointment. This may explain why in some instances, adaptation or rewriting, to the extent of restructuring the plot or characterization may find more ready acceptance among readers than full translation. The former may imply tailoring the text to dovetail to the literary assumptions of the reader while the latter leaves the reader to explore the cosmological gulf on his/her own.

To the translator, however, the 'Chineseness' which marks the genre is to be retained at all costs. For what distinguishes a classic martial arts novel is its 'Chineseness', created in part by the enigma associated with the seemingly cryptic and elusive language in penning this genre. This 'Chineseness', namely, cultural elements which impart to martial arts fiction its special flavour and colour, is found, in part, inherent in the Chinese language itself and in part in the Chinese culture inherent in martial arts fiction proper, both of which are to be transposed across linguistic and cultural boundaries in translation. Translational problems may include how to tackle the vast array of address terms for which no equivalent terms exist in the West; genre-specific terms relating to social customs or institutions in imperial China; as well as jargon and slang expressions which bring into the novel a dialect or argot that is truly genre-specific, giving martial arts fiction its distinctive flavour.

The successful translational migrations of the *gongan* [public cases] genre, forerunner of contemporary martial arts fiction, and in recent years, its re-migrations to various other countries, across different national, linguistic, and cultural boundaries, including, too, its migration back to its country of origin through re-translation, have once again borne out Bassnett's and Lefevere's claim that translation is a rewriting of an original text and that all rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as

such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way.¹⁰ One could perhaps test out van Gulik's "formula" for rewriting Chinese detective stories, drawing on Chinese plots when rewriting martial arts fiction in English in future. If his formula does not work, might there be another formula for rewriting martial arts fiction for the genre to function in the target culture? Or, instead of compounding a formula, one could also test the various functions of translation as suggested by Roda Roberts so as to help the reader penetrate the original text through its translation.

The avid translational activities of martial arts fiction in Asia, particularly in countries which have maintained close ties with Chinese traditional fiction, open up the possibility for inquiring why martial art fiction has been translated so little in the past into major world languages by situating this translational problem within the larger context of linguistic, political and socio-cultural issues in the English-speaking world vis-à-vis those in South-East Asia. Translation as appropriation by overseas Chinese in South-East Asia includes introducing subversive readings; establishing cultural roots; keeping alive the cultural heritage; enriching indigeneous literature; or more specifically, filling the need for more translations to be undertaken in the face of linguistic changes, as in Vietnam and Indonesia or combating a political situation at home, as in Cambodia. These different cases of translation appropriation certainly invite further investigation. Meriting equal attention is an answer to the question as to why martial arts fiction has functioned as an innovatory force in shaping a new literary genre in Asian countries, such as Indonesia or Korea. Certain factors must have determined the varying degree of indiginization of the source literature in these two receiving countries. Perhaps an interesting issue to explore is why, in the West, has martial arts fiction, as a written medium, posed more resistance to crossing boundaries, linguistic and cultural, when compared to martial arts-themed books, detective stories, movies, and related culture, either as a written medium or in multi-media. In the East, on the contrary, martial arts

¹⁰ Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, p. vii.

fiction has preceded or even initiated other forms, such as martial arts poetry and cartoons in Korea and martial arts films in Indonesia. Such large questions are beyond the scope of this thesis, but it is hoped that the initial efforts expended here in researching almost virgin soil in a multi-disciplinary area may help not only to lay some groundwork for research in future, but also to generate further interest in taking up martial arts fiction as an object of serious study.

**Appendix IA: Classification of Martial Arts Fiction, by Major Writers,
at the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies**

Keys: O = Not classified
Ch f = Chinese fiction
m a f = Martial arts fiction

Huanzhulouzhu's 還珠樓主 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>E mei qi ai</i> 《峨眉七矮》	1984	O
<i>Bei hai tu long ji</i> 《北海屠龍記》	1984	O
<i>Shu shan jian xia xin zhuan</i> 《蜀山劍俠新傳》	1984	O
<i>Shu shan jian xia zhuan</i> 《蜀山劍俠傳》	1984	O
<i>Liu hu xia yin</i> 《柳湖俠隱》	1984	m a f
<i>Qing Cheng shi jiu xia</i> 《青城十九俠》	1985	O
<i>Shu shan jian xia xin zhuan</i> 《蜀山劍俠新傳》	1989	m a f
<i>Blades from the Willows</i> (translation)	1991	Ch f

Bai Yu's 白羽 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Shi er jin qian biao</i> 《十二金錢鏢》	1984	O
<i>Tou quan</i> 《偷拳》	1984	O
<i>Wu lin zheng xiong ji</i> 《武林爭雄記》	1984	O

Zheng Zhengyin's 鄭証因 work:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Ying zhua wang</i> 《鷹爪王》	1984	O

Wang Dulu's 王度盧 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Yan shi xia ling</i> 《燕市俠伶》	1984	O
<i>Feng yu shuang long jian</i> 《風雨雙龍劍》	1984	O
<i>He jing kun lun</i> 《鶴驚崑崙》	1984	O
<i>Bao jian jin Chai</i> 《寶劍金釵》	1985	O
<i>Jian qi zhu guang</i> 《劍氣珠光》	1985	O
<i>Tie qi yin ping</i> 《鐵騎銀瓶》	1985	O
<i>Wo hu cang long</i> 《臥虎藏龍》	1985	O
<i>Luo yang hao ke</i> 《洛陽豪客》	1988	Ch f / m a f

Zhu Zhenmu's 朱貞木 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Yi wang zhuan</i> 《翼王傳》	1949	O
<i>Luo sha fu ren</i> 《羅刹夫人》	1984	O
<i>Man ku feng yun</i> 《蠻窟風雲》	1984	O
<i>Hu xiao long yin</i> 《虎嘯龍吟》	1985	O
<i>Qi sha bei</i> 《七殺碑》	1985	O

Gu Mingdao's 顧明道 work:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Huang jiang nu xia</i> 《荒江女俠》	1985	O

Jin Yong's 金庸 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Yi tian tu long ji</i> 《倚天屠龍記》	1961	O
<i>Xue shan fei hu</i> 《雪山飛狐》	1970	O
<i>Shu jian en Chou lu</i> 《書劍恩仇錄》	1975	O
<i>She diao ying xiong zhuan</i> 《射鵰英雄傳》	1976	O
<i>Fei hu wai zhuan</i> 《飛狐外傳》	1977	O
<i>Yi tian tu long ji</i> 《倚天屠龍記》	1978	O
<i>Tian long ba bu</i> 《天龍八部》	1978	O
<i>Bi xue jian</i> 《碧血劍》	1978	O
<i>Xia ke xing</i> 《俠客行》	1979	O
<i>Lian Cheng jue</i> 《連城訣》	1980	O
<i>Lu ding ji</i> 《鹿鼎記》	1981	O
<i>Xiao ao jiang hu</i> 《笑傲江湖》	1985	O
<i>Bi xue jian</i> 《碧血劍》	1986	Ch f
<i>Shen diao xia lu</i> 《神鵰俠侶》	1990	Ch f
<i>Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain</i> (translation)	1993	m a f

Liang Yusheng's 梁羽生 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Ping zong xia ying lu</i> 《萍蹤俠影錄》	19-?	O
<i>Da Tang you xia zhuan</i> 《大唐游俠傳》	19-?	O
<i>Mu ye liu xing</i> 《牡野流星》	19-?	O
<i>Huan jian qi qing lu</i> 《還劍奇情錄》	19-?	O
<i>Kuang xia tian jiao mo nu</i> 《狂俠天驕魔女》	196-?	O
<i>Guang ling jian</i> 《廣陵劍》	1977	m a f
<i>Bai fa mo nu zhuan</i> 《白髮魔女傳》	1977	O
<i>Jiang hu san nu xia</i> 《江湖三女俠》	1977	O
<i>Kuang xia tian jiao mo nu</i> 《狂俠天驕魔女》	1977	O
<i>Lian jian feng yun lu</i> 《聯劍風雲錄》	1977	O
<i>Long feng bao chai yuan</i> 《龍鳳寶釵緣》	1977	O
<i>Long hu dou jing hua</i> 《龍虎鬥京華》	1977	O
<i>Nu di qi ying zhuan</i> 《女帝奇英傳》	1977	O
<i>Qi jian xian Tian shan</i> 《七劍下天山》	1977	O
<i>You jian jiang hu</i> 《游劍江湖》	1977	O
<i>Yun hai yu gong yuan</i> 《雲海玉弓緣》	1977	O
<i>Feng yun lei dian</i> 《風雲雷電》	1984	O

Gu Long's 古龍 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Bian fu chuan qi</i> 《蝙蝠傳奇》	198-?	O
<i>Wu lin wai shi</i> 《武林外史》	1989	Ch f
<i>Les Quatre Brigands du Huabei</i> (translation)	1990	Ch f / m a f

Appendix IB: Classification of Martial Arts Fiction, by Major Writers, at the Library of Harvard University

Keys: O = Not classified
 Ch f = Chinese fiction
 m a f = Martial arts fiction

Huanzhulouzhu's 還珠樓主 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Gao lan yi ren zhuan</i> 《皋蘭異人傳》	1947	fiction
<i>Liu hu xia yin</i> 《柳湖俠隱》	1984	fiction
<i>E mei qi ai</i> 《峨眉七矮》	1984	fiction
<i>Bei hai tu long ji</i> 《北海屠龍記》	1984	fiction
<i>Shu shan jian xia zhuan</i> 《蜀山劍俠傳》	1984	fiction
<i>Qing Cheng shi jiu xia</i> 《青城十九俠》	1985	fiction
<i>Yun hai zheng qi ji</i> 《雲海爭奇記》	1990	O
<i>Blades from the Willows (translation)</i>	1991	see notes below

Notes: "A novel of fantasy and martial arts adventure".

Bai Yu 白羽 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Shi er jin qian biao</i> 《十二金錢鏢》	1984	O
<i>Tou quan</i> 《偷拳》	1984	O
<i>Wu lin zheng xiong ji</i> 《武林爭雄記》	1984	fiction

Zheng Zhengyin's 鄭証因 work:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Ying zhua wang</i> 《鷹爪王》	1984	fiction

Wang Dulu's 王度盧 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Yan shi xia ling</i> 《燕市俠伶》	1984	fiction
<i>Feng yu shuang long jian</i> 《風雨雙龍劍》	1984	fiction
<i>He jing kun lun</i> 《鶴驚崑崙》	1985	fiction
<i>Bao jian jin Chai</i> 《寶劍金釵》	1985	fiction
<i>Jian qi zhu guang</i> 《劍氣珠光》	1985	fiction
<i>Wo hu cang long</i> 《臥虎藏龍》	1985	fiction
<i>Tie qi yin ping</i> 《鐵騎銀瓶》	1985	fiction

Zhu Zhenmu's 朱貞木 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Luo sha fu ren</i> 《羅刹夫人》	1984	fiction
<i>Bian cai feng yun</i> 《邊塞風雲》 (known also as <i>Man ku feng yun</i> 《蠻窟風雲》)	1984	fiction
<i>Hu xiao long yin</i> 《虎嘯龍吟》	1985	fiction
<i>Qi sha bei</i> 《七殺碑》	1985	fiction

Gu Mingdao's 顧明道 work:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Huang jiang nu xia</i> 《荒江女俠》	1985	fiction

Jin Yong's 金庸 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Shu jian en Chou lu</i> 《書劍恩仇錄》	1975	kung fu novel
<i>Xue shan fei hu</i> 《雪山飛狐》	1980	fiction
<i>Bai ma xiao xi feng</i> 《白馬嘯西風》	1988	O
<i>Xiao ao jiang hu</i> 《笑傲江湖》	1992	m a f
<i>Tian long ba bu</i> 《天龍八部》	1992	m a f
<i>Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain (translation)</i>	1993	O
<i>Bi xue jian</i> 《碧血劍》	1994	m a f
<i>Fei hu wai zhuan</i> 《飛狐外傳》	1994	m a f
<i>Lu ding ji</i> 《鹿鼎記》	1994	m a f
<i>She diao ying xiong zhuan</i> 《射鵰英雄傳》	1994	m a f
<i>Shen diao xia lu</i> 《神鵰俠侶》	1994	m a f
<i>Shu jian en Chou lu</i> 《書劍恩仇錄》	1994	m a f
<i>Tian long ba bu</i> 《天龍八部》	1994	m a f
<i>Xia ke xing</i> 《俠客行》	1994	m a f
<i>Xue shan fei hu</i> 《雪山飛狐》	1994	m a f
<i>Yi tian tu long ji</i> 《倚天屠龍記》	1994	m a f

Gu Long's 古龍 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Jian ci xiao xiao</i> 《劍刺蕭蕭》	1980	fiction
<i>Wu lin wai shi</i> 《武林外史》	1989	m a f
<i>Jian ke xing</i> 《劍客行》	1992	kung fu fiction
<i>Jian du mei xiang</i> 《劍毒梅香》	1992	novel

Appendix IC: Classification of Martial Arts Fiction, by Major Writers, at the Library of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Keys: O = Not classified
 Ch f = Chinese fiction
 m a f = Martial arts fiction

Jin Yong's 金庸 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Lu ding ji</i> 《鹿鼎記》	1981	O
<i>Fei hu wai zhuan</i> 《飛狐外傳》	1989	fiction
<i>Xia ke xing</i> 《俠客行》	1989	fiction
<i>Xiao ao jiang hu</i> 《笑傲江湖》	1989	fiction
<i>Xiao ao jiang hu</i> 《笑傲江湖》	1989	O
<i>Xue shan fei hu</i> 《雪山飛狐》	1989	fiction
<i>Yi tian tu long ji</i> 《倚天屠龍記》	1989	kung fu novel
<i>Lian Cheng jue</i> 《連城訣》	1989	fiction
<i>Bi xue jian</i> 《碧血劍》	1989	fiction
<i>Shu jian en Chou lu</i> 《書劍恩仇錄》	1989	kung fu novel
<i>Tian long ba bu</i> 《天龍八部》	1989	O
<i>She diao ying xiong zhuan</i> 《射鵰英雄傳》	1990	O
<i>Shen diao xia lu</i> 《神鵰俠侶》	1990	fiction
<i>Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain</i> (translation)	1993	O
<i>Lu ding ji</i> 《鹿鼎記》	1995-96	O

Liang Yusheng's 梁羽生 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Yun hai yu gong yuan</i> 《雲海玉弓緣》	c. 1984	m a f
<i>Bai fa mo nu zhuan</i> 《白髮魔女傳》	1985	fiction
<i>Qi jian xia Tian shan</i> 《七劍下天山》	1989	kung fu novel
<i>Bing he xi jian lu</i> 《冰河洗劍錄》	1990	O
<i>Bing chuan tian nu zhuan</i> 《冰川天女傳》	1991	O
<i>Ping zong xia ying lu</i> 《萍蹤俠影錄》	1991	kung fu novel
<i>Jiang hu san nu xia</i> 《江湖三女俠》	1992	m a f

**Appendix ID: Classification of Martial Arts Fiction, by Major Writers,
at the Library of Chinese University of Hong Kong**

Keys: O = Not classified
Ch f = Chinese fiction
m a f = Martial arts fiction

Huanzhulouzhushu's 還珠樓主 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Shu shan jian xia zhuan</i> 《蜀山劍俠傳》	O	O
<i>Bei hai tu long ji</i> 《北海屠龍記》	O	O
<i>Liu hu xia yin</i> 《柳湖俠隱》	O	O
<i>Qing cheng shi jiu xia</i> 《青城十九俠》	O	O
<i>Blades from the Willows</i> (translation)	1991	O

Bai Yu's 白羽 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Wu lin zheng xiong ji</i> 《武林爭雄記》	O	O

Wang Dulu's 王度盧 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Wo hu cang long</i> 《臥虎藏龍》	O	fiction
<i>Yu jiao long</i> 《玉嬌龍》	1985	fiction

Zhu Zhenmu's 朱貞木 work:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Hu xiao lung yin</i> 《虎嘯龍吟》	O	O

Jin Yong's 金庸 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Lian cheng jue</i> 《連城訣》	1991	O
<i>Fei hu wai zhuan</i> 《飛狐外傳》	1992	O
<i>Xia ke xing</i> 《俠客行》	1992	O
<i>Xue shan fei hu</i> 《雪山飛狐》	1992	O
<i>I tian tu long ji</i> 《倚天屠龍記》	1992	O
<i>Lu ding ji</i> 《鹿鼎記》	1992	O
<i>Bi xue jian</i> 《碧血劍》	1992	O
<i>Shen diao xia lu</i> 《神鵰俠侶》	1992	O
<i>Xiao ao jiang hu</i> 《笑傲江湖》	1993	O
<i>Shu jian en chou lu</i> 《書劍恩仇錄》	1993	O
<i>Tian long ba bu</i> 《天龍八部》	1993	O
<i>Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain</i> (translation)	1993	O

Liang Yusheng's 梁羽生 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Xia gu dan xin</i> 《俠骨丹心》	O	fiction
<i>Han hai xiong feng</i> 《瀚海雄風》	1990	O
<i>Qi jian xia Tian shan</i> 《七劍下天山》	1991	O
<i>Feng yun lei dian</i> 《風雲雷電》	1991	O
<i>Nu di qi ying zhuan</i> 《女帝奇英傳》	1991	O
<i>Ping zong xia ying lu</i> 《萍蹤俠影錄》	1991	O
<i>San hua nu xia</i> 《散花女俠》	1991	O
<i>Da Tang you xia zhuan</i> 《大唐游俠傳》	1991	O
<i>Yun hai yu gong yuan</i> 《雲海玉弓緣》	1991	O
<i>Bing chuan tian nu zhuan</i> 《冰川天女傳》	1991	O

<i>Lian jian feng yun lu</i> 《聯劍風雲錄》	1991	O
<i>Kuang xia tian jiao mo nu</i> 《狂俠天驕魔女》	1992	O
<i>Jiang hu san nu xia</i> 《江湖三女俠》	1992	O
<i>Feng lei zhen jiu zhou</i> 《風雷震九州》	1992	O
<i>Long feng bao chai yuan</i> 《龍鳳寶釵緣》	1992	O
<i>Ming di feng yun lu</i> 《鳴鏑風雲錄》	1992	O
<i>Bai fa mo nu zhuan</i> 《白髮魔女傳》	1993	O
<i>Huan jian qi qing lu</i> 《還劍奇情錄》	1993	O
<i>Hui jian xin mo</i> 《慧劍心魔》	1993	O
<i>Wu lin tian jiao</i> 《武林天驕》	1993	O
<i>You jian jiang hu</i> 《游劍江湖》	1993	O
<i>Bing he xi jian lu</i> 《河洗劍錄》	1993	O
<i>Dan zhi jing lei</i> 《彈指驚雷》	1994	O
<i>Wu dang yi jian</i> 《武當一劍》	1994	O
<i>Mu ye liu xing</i> 《牡野流星》	1994	O
<i>Jian wang chen si</i> 《劍網塵絲》	1994	O
<i>Jue sai zhuan feng lu</i> 《絕塞傳烽錄》	1994	O

Gu Long's 古龍 works:

Title	Year	Classification
<i>Xin yue zhuan qi</i> 《新月傳奇》	O	O

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「源順鏢局」今猶在 / 「大刀王五」有後人 [Yuan Shun convoy still stands
here today, while Wang Wu the Broadsword is survived by his offspring]." *Ming Pao* 《明報》, 13 February, C4.